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THE CHALLENGE OF CHRISTIANITY TO A WORLD AT WAR

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Theology

The Challenge of Christianity to a World at War

BY

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FOREWORD

THE following chapters, with one or two exceptions, were in the first instance delivered in the form of public addresses during the past few months;—that on *Providence*, to the Yorkshire Congregational Union; that on *The Christian Ethic and the War*, to the Congregational Union of England and Wales; that on *Population* to the Northern Counties Theological Conference; that on *Civilisation and Naturalism* as Presidential Address to the Bradford and District Free Church Council; that on *Militarism* to the Bradford Sunday Society; and that on the *Problems of Peace* at a City Meeting at Birmingham, under the auspices of the Wesleyan Conference. This fact will account for the occasional overlapping of the argument in the various chapters, and for any lack of literary finish that may occasionally

strike the reader, and for which the writer craves his indulgence. The book is published because it appears to fill a gap in recent war literature, and to call attention to certain pressing religious problems raised by the war, with such answers as the writer is capable of formulating in the interests of faith.

" Still, as of old,
Man by himself is priced.
For thirty pieces Judas sold
Himself, not Christ."

INTRODUCTION

A WORLD AT WAR

We must all feel that we are living in a different world from the one we occupied a year ago. If we take up a book or a newspaper scarcely twelve months old, we feel as though it belonged to a bygone age or country. Its most pungent sentences fall flat on the ear; its appeals no longer move us; its tame world-view seems strange and alien from our present troubled and tragic outlook. When we try to realise the bearing of the trivial questions that then absorbed our minds, we ask ourselves, " Did we really think and feel like *that?* " For the horizons of life have widened and deepened; the air is electric with unfamiliar forces, trembling with unnameable possi-

bilities; the very sunlight and bird-voices of the spring have taken on a strange quality.

"The blackberries all have bugles, which once had Whitsun flutes,
And they have called the bonny leaves to join the green recruits.
. . . The Oak-tree and the Elm-tree have joined the colours now
And the cock-thrush is the sergeant that whistles on the bough."

A year ago we lived in a still and stable world from which romance and peril seemed finally to have vanished, leaving us to the dullness of an ordered routine. It was necessary to disappear into the fever-haunted swamps of Central Africa, or venture into the inclemencies of the Polar ice-cap in order to find dangers severe enough to call forth the resources of heroism on a spectacular scale. When the German Emperor last August launched his thunder-bolt of war on an astonished planet, all was changed as in the twinkling of an eye. The securities and immunities of modern life were suddenly thrown down. We were flung back into the perils and jeopardies of

primitive times, and the very fabric of our slowly built up civilisation was shaken to its foundations in a day. There had been wars and rumours of wars here and there in the world almost incessantly for more than a generation; but they were local, incidental, a mere eddy here and there in the main current of civilisation. True, ominous warnings had been sounding for some time of a great world-struggle that was imminent. But none of us believed that there was any real peril of such a calamity. Then—it came upon us, all in a moment. Before we could lift our eyes in horror, we were in the thick of a struggle so vast in its sweep, and so unutterable in its possibilities of woe to humanity, that all the previous wars of history seem to us now after a year of this war but as local skirmishes. For the Armageddon of history has come upon us. We are in the throes of the Final War, and there is not a man, woman or child on the continent of Europe who can say but that they may become personal victims of this flying death that deals its

fatal missiles from the earth, or from beneath the sea, or from the upper air.

But the present perils, and even the international issues of this struggle are not the only perils and issues that meet us. The world of ideas, of beliefs, even of ideals, is as much disturbed as the world of practical affairs. Our outlook on the Universe and on God has suddenly darkened; familiar landmarks of thought have disappeared as in a driving rain; the very pillars of faith for many of us lie prone and shattered on the ground. Ancient world-problems which had long since been lulled to sleep, not so much by the cogencies of human reason as by the securities of life, have reopened their eyes, stare us ominously in the face, and stand clamouring for more adequate solution than any given to them in the past. Problems of Providence—"fate, foreknowledge and free-will"—the relation of God's will to human initiative and responsibility—the Divine Government of this distracted world; problems of ethics,—war and peace,—the relation of the Christian Ideal to practical

human conduct; problems of Civilisation, of Patriotism, of Internationalism, of Human Progress and Destiny;—these are only some of the dark questions that have suddenly taken on a new insistence, and wait for a more adequate answer in view of this tremendous and illimitable struggle that has been thrust upon us—the struggle of a *World at War.*

A *world* at war—after nearly two millenniums of Christian training; after centuries of so-called Christian civilisation; after ages of the "reign of reason," and the "advancement of learning"; after two generations of almost universal education and popular enlightenment! A war, not against barbaric hosts, threatening the outposts of progress; not against savage tribes refusing the hand of civilisation for their uplifting; not against the decadent races of Africa, or the undeveloped nations of the East because they would not come into line; but war between "Christian" peoples who had long been boasting of being in the van of knowledge, political enlightenment,

social culture; war in Europe—a continent which for several centuries has been the theatre of the intensest, most progressive and evolving life; war between nations closely allied in blood, commerce, social relationship, philosophic and scientific intercourse; war above all between Germany and Britain as the protagonists—two peoples of one stem, who had for long shared in the higher movements of brain and heart which it was hoped would at last make the human race civilised and strong, and the world a place fit for men to live in at their highest and best. Such is the tragedy that has befallen mankind! And when we consider the character of the war, we are thrown into still greater bewilderment and sorrow. For though the combatants are civilised, the methods of warfare are barbaric. Granted that the fault for the savagery which has been manifested is on one side, and that the other is profoundly reluctant to stoop to so low a level, the phenomenon is none the less one that must give us pause, and fill us with a sense of profound humiliation and

shame. It is as though the lower bestialities of our nature, which we thought we had outgrown and left behind us for good, had all the time been biding their time, and when the pressure was for a moment released, had suddenly sprung into shameless life again. It is as though this war had suddenly confronted Man with *himself*, not as the child of God, but as the offspring of the Devil.

How could it be otherwise than that such a calamity should rouse the deepest solicitude in all thoughtful minds, and cause them to ask whether the very basis on which modern life is built, with its far-reaching inter-relationships, its elaborate institutions, its close-knit civilisation, be not insecure or false? Have we been taking vital principles for granted, and idly assuming what we should have taken pains first of all to substantiate? Is there anything fundamental to its well-being that the modern world has let go by default? Seeing that all the boasted progress of the last few centuries has led to this deplorable anti-climax, would it not do well to revise our tacit conclusion that it is

progress at all in any real sense? And if not, where is the missing link, the inherent fallacy, the vicious circle in our argument?

This book is an attempt to open out some helpful lines of thought for the benefit of those in whose minds these and other questions have been taking unquiet shape during these sad and ominous months. It may be well to state at the outset that it is written not for the wider public but for those who still believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but who are in sore perplexity how to adjust their faith to the situation that confronts them. What has our glorious Religion to say to us European nations in this our hour of crisis and horror? Shall we dare then to face the *Challenge of Christianity to a World at War?*

I am afraid it will cost some effort for us to take up this point of view. It has become a vicious habit among even Christian thinkers to view Christianity as being face to face with the challenge of the modern world, rather than *vice versa.* It is Religion that has become a problem to many of us, not

civilisation or modern culture, or the New Thought. Our postulates are not those of faith but of reason, or rather of criticism. So firm and immovable have the assumptions of physical science, and of the New Biology, Psychology, and what not, come to be considered, that the profound realities of the spirit, in virtue of which alone we are given our small opportunity of bringing the Universe to book, are tested by categories that belong to the laboratory, the classroom, or the market-place; — methods which end in evaluating the highest reality in terms of the lowest, God in terms of the universe, personality in terms of organism, mind in terms of matter, with the resulting impoverishment of all values, and the establishment of a false standard of judgment for all things Divine and human. It is time to reverse this process, to measure the low in the light of the high, and to bring our whole scheme of thought and life to the bar of the Highest we know. The recent development of events has brought home to us all with a shock of humiliation that there is

something radically wrong with the modern world. Perhaps we shall learn the age-long lesson once more, that though Christ be at the bar and Pilate on the judgment-seat, it is Pilate, not Jesus, who is being judged and found wanting.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHRISTIANITY TO A WORLD AT WAR

CHAPTER I

THE CHALLENGE TO FAITH—THE PROBLEM OF PROVIDENCE

It is idle to deny that for many devout souls one of the first questions raised by the Great War has relation to the Divine Government of the world. How are we to reconcile the outbreak of such a struggle as this, which jeopardises all the gains of past centuries of splendid scientific insight, of patiently extended control over the natural forces of the world in the service of man, with the idea that there is any providential control of human events at all? Even for those who cling stubbornly to such an idea there is much in the present situation which throws Faith back on to her last defences. How can we

square our belief in the Sovereignty of God with the condition of such a world as is around us to-day? Let us face this question as best we may.

I

Let us in a few introductory words define and delimit our terms. The word Providence is commonly used in two senses, and we have here to deal with only one of these senses. In the first place Providence is used in its proper and etymological meaning as God's foreseeing and providing care for His children. He is the Creator of the physical universe, which is the *scenario* of the drama of life,—the home of all living beings, by whose interaction with their environment and through whose mutual relations to one another and to their Maker this drama of the Divine holy purpose and love is enacted and moves to its consummation. The method and means by which God carries His will to fulfilment through His creatures is called His Providence. This is the larger meaning of the word. In this sense it suggests many and

difficult problems, but these are not our immediate concern just now.

In the second place the word Providence is used for the *moral government of God* in the more restricted sense. Here we will fall back for our definition on the great Calvin who has treated this question with thoroughness and insight from his own standpoint. "By Providence we mean not an unconcerned sitting of God in Heaven, from which He merely observes the things that are done in the world, but that all-active and all-concerned *seatedness* on His throne above, by which He governs the world which He Himself hath made. So that God as viewed in the glass of His Providence is not only the Maker of all things in a moment, but the perpetual Ruler of all things which He hath created. That Providence therefore which we ascribe to God, pertains as much to His operating hands, as to His observing eyes." So far Calvin. In this definition we are made to think of God not as *separated* from the world—as Deism pictured Him—watching a self-sustained and self-evolving

machine operating without interference (except possibly when it goes wrong);—nor yet as totally *immersed* in the world—as Pantheism viewed Him, so that He is practically identical with the Universe, and *equally* operative in the little and the great, the evil and the good that goes on; but as *distinct* from the world, *yet operating in it* and through it; and while far from being equally identified with all that happens, yet controlling and using all that He may bring His sure ends to pass. In other words we are to consider God as the Personal Ruler and Guide of His universe, related to all as Creator and Sustainer, and holding a special relation to men as free moral agents; but ever and always actively and efficiently directing all forces, and wills, and events to that "Divine far-off event to which the whole creation moves." This is the Christian view of the Providential Government of God. And it is Providence in this sense that we have to deal with here.

II

Before, however, we come to our precise subject, we must consider one preliminary problem. It has just been pointed out that while God is related to all existing things and beings as Creator and Sustainer, He is related in a special and unique manner to men as free moral agents. There is here a mystery which, just because it includes a unique and unparalleled fact, cannot be completely subsumed under the more general idea of God's causative activity in the cosmos. For that as a system of forces and events, causes and results, God is directly responsible; they are the expression of His power, intention and effectual working in the fullest sense. And in so far as we human beings are the fruit of His creative energy and purpose, He is ultimately responsible for all we are and do; for if He but for a single instant removed His sustaining hand from us, we should utterly disappear and be wiped out of existence. But having said that, we have not said all. In the Universe as we

know it, and as we know ourselves, there are two kinds of will—one the all-inclusive will of God, which in the end is bound to prevail —and secondly the human will, endowed with self-consciousness and free moral initiative. In what sense we are free it is impossible exactly to define, and therefore it is hard to argue about it. We can only appeal to the inner consciousness of every unsophisticated person, who knows himself in a very real sense to be free—a centre of self-determined, unconstrained activity; and who feels that he is able to say *no* even to the revealed will of God Himself. Unless this is so, then we are not responsible for what we do; we are puppets in the cosmic show, who, while thinking that they are acting freely, are being pulled hither and thither by the Celestial Showman for His own ends. But granted that our self-consciousness is a true and not a lying witness, we are sure that our freedom within its limits is a true freedom, and that we have a real influence on events. The course of the world is thus a resultant of two sets of

forces—the Divine will, and the human. So long as the Divine and human wills are harmonious, all that happens is in the line of the Divine intention and purpose; but if men resist God's will, that will is either defeated in whole or in part, or His action must be so modified as to realise His purpose in spite of us. Here is the real mystery of the Divine Government. For unquestionably the Divine and human wills are largely in opposition—if the Christian revelation of God's nature as Holy Love is valid and true. Men as a rule do not take any trouble to find out what the will of God for them is; and when that is revealed to them they do not for the most part give themselves with diligence and whole-heartedness to fulfil it. In other words, this is a world of moral evil as well as moral good. Too often we do what is "right," i.e. "good" in our own eyes. We sin singly, in company, and collectively as a race. And the great Providential problem of God's Government is—what is His attitude, and relation, and activity towards the sinfulness of mankind?

Is He helpless in view of having given man his moral freedom—which he has abused? Or will He take away man's freedom because he has abused it? Or is He able, without interfering with that freedom, to use even man's sin for His own ends, and so bring a greater good out of evil itself than even *He* could had He not made man free?

III

And here we come face to face with our special problem—the War and our Doctrine of Providence.

A colossal evil has suddenly burst forth into activity in the world, an evil so tremendous that it has involved the whole of Western civilisation in its operation, and has turned the favoured continent of Europe into a vast shambles. As Professor Jacks puts it in a recent number of the *Hibbert Journal*: "Everyone who reflects on the present condition of Europe must feel that he is in the presence of something anomalous, contradictory, and absurd. We see the

forces of civilisation employed in an enterprise which the very spirit of civilisation condemns. We find ourselves committed to courses opposed to everything we most desire. The will of the nations, whether singly or together, is for peace. It is against their will that they are at war. The thing they 'would not' is the thing they are doing. The absurd and the horrible have joined forces. The separate gains of civilisation are put to uses contradictory to the ideals they severally represent. Science, always fostered as the benefactress of man, has become the handmaid of destruction. With the help of secrets won from Nature by devoted minds men are turning the earth into a shambles. Social organisation, achieved at immense cost of humanitarian effort, is a means to the concentration of stupendous forces for the most inhuman of ends. Intellect, trained for the discovery of truths by elaborate systems of education, takes service under the Father of lies, calls itself diplomacy, and lures nations to ruin. Knowledge of human nature, knowledge of history,

knowledge of the laws which govern society, are so many weapons in the hands of conspirators; they are tools for the construction of enormous ambuscades. The impression left on the mind is that the very will of humanity is being thwarted and mocked. It is as though another will, not human, had wrested the control of man's affairs from the hand of man, and had set him at variance with himself; a malign, diabolic will, which asserts its mastery by forcing civilisation to use the choicest fruits of the ages as weapons of offence against humanity." In short, we seem to be in the grip of a monstrous cosmic dualism, and as though the evil side of that dualism had at last overthrown the good in a final struggle for the mastery. And without committing ourselves to so pessimistic a position, it does seem as though for the time the evil principle of the world—whether we call it personal or impersonal—has gained at least a temporary victory over all that is progressive and generous and good.

Is it any wonder, in view of all this, that

men who desire to retain a belief in a good over-ruling and all-potent spirit, at the heart of things are sorely troubled, and find themselves, as already suggested, thrown on to the last defences of faith? Is it any wonder that the cry goes up from thousands more whether there is in very deed a good God who rules all things well? Is the great Being asleep? Or is He at last, wearied out with the inherent evil of the heart of mankind, leaving it to itself, that it may work out the logical and inevitable issues of its self-centred refusal to obey the Highest it knows?

IV

This questioning and baffled spirit of faith expresses itself in three great questions.

1. The first touches the ultimate issue of all—"Why did God permit such an evil to burst forth in a world guided and governed by Himself?"

If this is a devil's world, then there is no problem to face, for he seems just now to be having it all his own way. But if it is

after all God's world, how comes it that such a thing is possible ?

What is the Christian answer to such a question ? This surely—that what we see now on a colossal scale is only the problem we have always had to face in detail—the fact of moral evil itself. The mere scale of the problem adds nothing to its essential point. There is nothing new here except the vastness of the trouble. The fact that nations can engage in such a struggle is not a whit more difficult to account for than the fact of evil on the smallest scale. And without pretending to throw light on the ultimate mystery of evil in a Divinely ordered universe, we can say confidently that given the fact of man's freedom in the individual and the race, God could not have prevented this war except by taking back the gift of moral initiative on the part of man, and so turning the universe from a moral into a non-moral state ; thus making goodness and holiness as impossible as evil and sin. This we could not conceive Him doing without dethroning Himself as the great moral

Governor of the world, which, from a Christian standpoint, is inconceivable.

2. Or the question is put thus—"Why does not God stop the war?" We have heard this question seriously put by more than one anxious and devout person during the past months. The answer is partly the same as that given to the first question. It could not, so far as we can see, be done without nullifying that human freedom which lies at the root of our moral being. And if anyone suggests that God must have resources for so controlling events as to bring this terrible business to an end without so drastic reversal of His cosmic plan as the withdrawal of human freedom, I say in reply—(1) This is a supposition whose validity no man can guarantee, for our ignorance of His secret ways is too dense to give us any ground for such an answer; and (2) Even if it were possible for God to stop the war, it may be that He will yet (as we shall see a little later on in the argument) bring to pass through the war better results for His great purpose, than by

stopping it by an almighty fiat or by secret instrumentalities.

3. Or thirdly, the question is asked—"Why does not God side openly with one or other of the combatant nations, and give it speedy and decisive victory?"

This question makes two great assumptions—that one side is entirely in the right, while the other is entirely in the wrong; and that the first has a right to demand Divine help and victory because it is in the right. Both these assumptions may be wrong. It is certain that both the Germans and the Allies claim to be in the right, and both cannot be right; and while we on our part have no doubt of the substantial justice of *our* cause, are we quite sure that we do not share in that general condition of wrong-being and wrong-doing which led to the war? Has our national record, even towards Germany, Austria and Turkey, been as blameless in the past as we are apt to take for granted in the heat of this terrific struggle? The causes of this war lie far back in history—in the condition of civilisation, in the

sinful and materialistic temper of the modern world-order (or disorder). Who has eye so keen and just that he can unravel the tangled skeins of international diplomacy —that secret diplomacy whose machinations led to the outbreak of the war—so as nicely and accurately to apportion the praise and blame of each participant Government? Only a Pharisee would make such a claim; it is certainly not for us to do so. Further, even granted that one side is absolutely right, and that ours is that side, can we, looking back at the history of mankind, say confidently that God always openly sides with the righteous man and nation and bring it to speedy victory? Has it not been the perennial problem of faith from the time of Job and Habakkuk that God so often permits the evil man or nation to oppress the good? Is not Christianity built on a sacrifice in which the purest soul the world has seen was done to death triumphantly by organised wickedness in high places? And was not the Chosen Nation saved through its very defeats and calamities

and captivities? And may not God have some better thing in store (for instance) for martyred Belgium and for the world at large—and that *through* the tragedy of her martyrdom—than if she had escaped scot-free from the invading hordes of her Teuton oppressor?

V

The way out in the discussion of the Providential problem raised by this war, lies not in demanding answers to such crude questions as we have suggested, but in another direction.

Let us return for a moment to a point already touched—the relation of the Divine, all-controlling, all-directive will in the cosmos, to the sub-controlling, sub-directive human will which is also here, and which so often runs counter to that higher and ampler Will. What is that relation? It is in the first place *permissive.* God has set man a "hand's-breadth off," as Browning says, "to give the newly-made room to live"—to act and work out his destiny without

interference with his inalienable freedom, whether to obey or to rebel. However the Divine purpose may be accomplished it will not be by reversing the course of evolution from mollusc to man, from the determined atom to the self-determining soul. Is He then without resources? Has the Creator abdicated the throne of the universe in favour of the Creature? Is the future to be a man-made, and not a Divinely-ordered future? That would be to substitute an uncertainty for a certainty, a purely human Providence for the Divine, and man would be greater in power if not better in goodness than God Himself. This indeed is the alternative that appears in the naturalistic or humanist world-view just now so ably and so popularly preached in the works of Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells and their school. If that however be the only possible alternative for us, then farewell to any guarantee of progress, any sure faith for the future. For who shall guarantee the inherent progressiveness of the human race when divorced from Divine guidance

and goodness? Alas for the dreary and uncertain speculations concerning the future of the world on which these writers build their vision of betterment! They are of such stuff as dreams are made of, and have no more value than the unsubstantial assumptions on which they are so insecurely based.

Those who still believe in the God revealed in the Bible and incarnate in Jesus are free to follow another alternative. It is to believe that while we shall possibly never be able to put the relation of the Divine will to the human into clear logical language—for there is a mystery here that eludes thought itself—we can, as already suggested, recognise two clear lines of causation in the moral world. There is first the human will in the individual and the race which works freely within the circle of the directive all-pervading will of God, which is *modified* but not *necessitated* by our activity, and which in quite a secret way of its own is able to bring its ends to pass *through our evil as well as our good, our disobedience no less than our loyalty.* I do not think I can personally adopt Calvin's

bold language in giving utterance to this principle when he says that "those things which are vainly or unrighteously done by man are rightly and righteously the works of God"; but I can fully follow him when he claims that God brings His ends to pass through man's evil actions and intentions as well as through his virtuous actions and intentions. This at least is the doctrine preached in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. There the vanity, the selfishness, the wrong-doing, the iniquity of man are as clearly and boldly emphasised as his goodness; and the chief burden of the great Book is to show not merely how in spite of man's evil God wins His way at last, but that He wins it by using man's evil equally with his goodness for the furtherance of His saving purpose.

Take one or two illustrations. First the story of Joseph, which, be it glorified legend or solid biography, is a miniature allegory of the providential course of the world. When his brethren after Jacob's death go humbly into his presence, beseeching

him for his final forgiveness for the wrong they did him in selling him into slavery, he says to them, "Am I in the place of God? *But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, . . . to save much people alive*" (Gen. l. 19, 20). It seems to me that this saying penetrates deep into the providential problem of the world, and throws a beam of light into its very heart. These men *had meant evil* to Joseph; their action was mean, despicable, and unredeemed in its cruelty and selfishness. But they were not the only actors in the drama. By linking himself with the will of God not only did Joseph find in his very misfortune the means to his own advancement, but God through him brought to pass a wonderful emancipation to the very men who had done the wrong, and to a great nation. The sin was made a means to the furtherance of a Divine good. And without adducing a score of striking references from the Old Testament in which the same truth is illustrated and enforced, let us consider the highest illustration of all in the way in

which the sacrifice of our blessed Lord was consummated through the very iniquity that hounded Him to His death. Round His Cross there surged a veritable stream of evil. Every sin was sampled in the forces that were allied for his destruction—envy, malice, hypocrisy, hate, cruelty, scorn, treachery, cowardice, misgovernment, and all uncharitableness. Yet out of these linked-up iniquities was woven the gentle, irresistible cord of Divine love and sacrifice; the passions of hell were made ancillary and contributory to the triumph of Divine grace! Explain it as you may, this is history, this is fact. And it is no isolated fact, but, rather, the focal point of God's government of the world, Who ever makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and uses the very victory of evil to further all the more surely His march to final conquest.

I think we all intuitively recognise the same law in our personal experience. We *act* at least on the assumption that while particular events are due to the operation of secondary causes for which men are

responsible, the critical events, and still more the sum-total of our experience, are Divinely ordered. Men often die through the carelessness of others, or through their own, and yet when the inevitable takes place, it seems to fall into a general plan which we attribute to the will of God. We do not often think out the relation between these two lines of causation (perhaps no man can do this fully), but it is certain that we recognise them, and this without in any way interfering with our sense of the reality of human responsibility on the one hand, or of the ultimate responsibility of God for the general Providential order on the other.

One point more must be recognised in order to complete our doctrine of Providence. It is to emphasise the fact that while God can and does bring good out of evil, He is not independent of human action and intention in doing so. Our freedom must be a reality for God as well as for ourselves. What we do makes a difference to Him and to the ultimate issues of the moral universe. True, whether we help Him or

resist Him, He is not at the mercy of our wills; we *can* help, and we *can* resist His will, and while His final ends will be secure, it makes all the difference in the world whether we are on His side or against Him. In other words, *He works out His will through means;* and *we are the means.* Human Providence, which is a great and growing reality in the movement of the world, is not something which lies alongside of the Divine causality, but is a part of its instrumentality. We are to be co-workers with Him, and if we refuse or fail Him, we may not be able to hinder His ultimate victory over evil, but *we* shall lose our part in the victory and be rejected at last. When Henry IV returned from a great victory he said to one of his followers who had refused to go with him to the battle, "Go hang yourself, brave Crillon; *we* fought at Arques, and *you* were not there." It therefore does make a difference how we live and what we do, and whether we help the Divine process of triumphing over evil in the world. Ill for those who will not arrange themselves

on the side of the heavenly battalions in the fight; well for those who do!

VI

The challenge of faith in the Divine Providence is thus—what has the world of civilised man been doing with its God-given liberty that this calamitous war has come to pass? If men had been to each other what they might have been, if the nations of Europe had done by one another as they ought to have done, would this trouble have come upon us? These questions have only to be asked to find the answer staring us in the face. This war would not have been so much as thought of were it not that in a world made for co-operation in all that is just and good, men have thought ill of one another and not well: have been inspired not by faith in one another but by ignoble suspicion and distrust: have coveted one another's lands, and wealth, and position in the world: have made up their minds to balk one another's legitimate desire for

expansion and progress, instead of combining to further the interests of mankind at large; above all, have ignored the Divine will and purpose for humanity, as though all that each nation was called upon to consider was its own selfish plans and policies in a world given over to internecine struggle for place and power. The only possible issue of such a condition is the outbreak of such a war as this. Sooner or later it was bound to come; and it has come upon us now because the tensions and frictions of international policy at last broke through all restraint. Our Armageddon is our Judgment Day. We are called upon to meet our Judge; this war is His verdict on the piled-up iniquities of the modern world.

Let us therefore not lift up hands of impious revolt against the Judge of all the earth because He has permitted this war to break out. Let us rather bow ourselves in the dust for our iniquities and our sins. It is *we*, the nations of modern Europe; we, who boast of our civilisation, our progress, our superiority to all other

nations, as though wisdom was born with us, and will die with us; we, who have forgotten God and His righteous laws, and have gone after our own ways, instead of following His; it is *we* who are responsible for this evil thing. The laws of Divine Providence are as immutable as God Himself, for they are the expression of His holy and steadfast will; and they cannot be violated with impunity. It is Human Providence that has failed, and come into conflict with the Divine. *How* this has come about, and how the mischief can alone be remedied, will more or less clearly emerge in the following pages; how also the Divine will is already clearly beginning to manifest itself in mercy as well as judgment.

CHAPTER II

THE CHALLENGE TO CIVILISATION— THE PROBLEM OF NATURALISM

Much has been written on the Philosophy behind this war, and it has been written from many points of view. We do not intend to enlarge on this well-worn subject here. There is something however which is more fundamental if we would take our bearings rightly,—and that is the Philosophy behind modern civilisation as a whole. It is easy to indict the German people for following the false lights that have lured her into her present position; it is not so easy to realise how far we ourselves are guilty of bowing to false idols, and forgetting the true God. It will, we think, not be difficult, however, to show that if Germany is a sinner above others in her whole-hearted adherence to a theory of reality that is essentially irreligious and immoral, modern civilisation

as a whole, in so far as it has distinctive and recognisable characteristics, is based on a world-view (what the Germans call Welt-Anschauung) that has practically no place for a personal God in its outlook.

I

Modern civilisation is the child of modern science, and modern science is the result of a new method of enquiry into the phenomena and laws of Nature. From the earliest dawn of reflection men had used their powers of observation on the world of facts and things around them; but they had been hampered by a false method of dealing with these facts. They approached every branch of enquiry by the *a priori* method, i.e. they first formed their notion of what reality must be, and then went to Nature for confirmation of their preconceived ideas. This was true both of Philosophy, the theory of ultimate reality, and of Science proper, the theory of secondary realities, or phenomena. The ancient philos-

ophers started with the notion that the first beginning of things was to be found in a single principle—fire, or water, or a rain of atoms, or what not,—and from this primal unity they endeavoured to build up a theory of the manifold world as presented to sense and observation. The result was that any fact in Nature or man which would not fit in with this theory must either be denied, or treated as an exception, or tacitly ignored as of no significance. It is easy to see that no real progress could be made in philosophy or in science along this pathway. At last it slowly dawned on the wise men of the world that the right attitude of a student of Nature was not that of the dogmatist, but the pupil. He must approach the world with open mind, as a learner, if he would make real acquaintance with her facts and her laws. By degrees, therefore, the *a posteriori* method took the place of the *a priori;* i.e. instead of arguing down from principles to facts, men began with facts, observed them accurately, found the laws which governed them, and finally formed

their general theory of these laws. As soon as this method became prevalent progress began to be made in all directions; man's power over Nature began to extend by leaps and bounds; experiment led to discovery and invention; and the vast fabric of modern science was raised with the world-wide practical results which we see to-day in the civilised world.

Now such a body of scientific thought is perfectly consistent with a Christian philosophy as such, i.e. with a spiritual theory of ultimate reality. What is gradually coming to light, however, is that modern civilisation as we know it, which was first made possible by the Christian view of the world, and which was nursed into life in its cherishing atmosphere, has proved itself to be built on a very different foundation. Christianity reveals man as potentially at least the child of God; this world as under the governance of a supernatural order; life a gift whose value can be realised only in obedience to transcendent laws and as a preparation for a glorious immortality.

The aim of our Faith in all ages has been to bring men to acknowledge these truths and to be obedient to their call; and these truths were the postulates or axioms of those ages which prepared the way for the rise of the modern world;—at least there was no other reasoned world-view in competition with it when modern civilisation began its course.

What is distinctive of modern civilisation however is not that world-view but another which at first grew up slowly within it, but of late years has been asserting itself strongly as an alternative against it. That view may be called the view of naturalistic evolution. That God's method of creation has been that of an evolution or gradual unfolding, all religious as well as secular thinkers now believe. But the naturalistic philosopher believes this evolution to be independent of all supernatural guidance or control. It is held to be by the operation of resident or immanent forces, in other words entirely from within, through its own inherent potency. There is life on one hand, and its

environment or all-surrounding medium on the other. Life is the impelling energy that strives to realise itself by means of its environment, an environment which in the last analysis is purely material or physical; it is the interaction of these two that has produced this complex, many-hued world, including man himself with his mind and body, spirit and organism, hopes and ideals, as the final, or, thus far at least, the highest expression of the resident forces of the universe. In such a scheme of thought the supernatural or transcendent has no meaning; the word *God* has no place in its vocabulary; there is no function for the Divine to fulfil in such a cosmos, unless we call the Life-force God which has been slowly coming to self-realisation, and which in man has suddenly as it were broken out into the open and become self-conscious. Modern Science is an attempt to understand things from this point of view; and it explains them by reducing everything into the simplest relations, by which it always means explaining the higher in terms of

the lower—mind by biology, biology by chemistry, chemistry by physics, and physics as the laws of motion and mass. Now as a method of gaining certain practical results there is no harm, but much benefit, in following this plan, if only we remember that we are simply following a device for special ends. It is when the scientist forsakes his own proper work, and claims to be a philosopher as well, i.e. attempts the ultimate explanation of all reality by this method, that he makes a fatal mistake. The true philosopher approaches reality in quite another way; he begins with mind, not matter; gets at matter through its mental equivalents; reaches the physical through the spiritual; and explains everything in terms not of the lowest but of the highest he knows. Religion here joins not with the scientist, but with the philosopher; it looks up, not down, for its sustaining laws, its standard of values, its ultimate explanation of all things; it believes, in a word, in a universe that finds its origin, its sustenance and end in a personal God as the

highest reality "who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4. 6).

Now modern civilisation as a whole is based on a world-view which practically ignores God in the above sense, and views the Universe as a self-complete system of laws and forces, with Man as their measure and controller. Of course there have been and are plenty of Christian thinkers and believers who do not take this view, who indeed valiantly oppose it; but we are dealing with what is distinctive of the civilisation of to-day as compared (let us say) with that of the Puritans, or that of the Middle Ages, when the religious view of the world was really powerful and determinative. Is it not clear that we religious people find it hard to maintain ourselves against the secular tendencies of the times? That the standard of business life, of politics, of social life, are alien from that of the Gospel we profess, and by which we desire to regulate our lives? That it is hard to be a Christian, not only because we have all to conquer our lower nature, but because we live in an

unsympathetic and alien environment ? That many even of ourselves have two standards —one for the home and private life, and another for business and public life, on the plea that the principles of the one cannot be applied to the other ? Or take the current literature of the day—does it make any room for spiritual realities at all, except as a negligible aspect of reality ? Do not the main currents of life run strongly on secularist, scientific, so-called practical lines, to the ignoring of idealist and religious ideas ? I think there can be but one answer to these crucial questions.

II

What, then, is the practical programme of this secularist civilisation ?

It is to improve this planet as a home for man, who has only a few years to live on it, and wishes to spend them to the best advantage. Having discovered the secret of knowledge, and of the control of the physical forces, the so-called progressive

peoples have been gradually mastering many devices for emancipating the race from its long-inherited ills and disabilities. Matter has gradually grown plastic under the hand of the chemist and physicist. Invention has contrived machines for the manufacture of countless contrivances which minister to the bodily comfort, the social convenience, the political expansion of human society. This planet, so huge to the imagination of our forefathers, has shrunk to the dimensions of a "mere parish of the solar system." Distance and time have been largely abolished, the far has become near, the inaccessible easy of approach, the impossible of twenty years ago the commonplace of to-day. Commerce and intercourse have become world-wide; wealth fabulous in amount, and exhaustless in prospect, has been accumulated at an ever-increasing rate; even poverty has become a problem nearing solution if only men could be got to consent to the better distribution of the wealth which all have helped to make. There has seemed to be no reason on the surface of things

why this earth, which has been the theatre of man's severe struggles to make it a tolerable dwelling-place, should not presently be a very desirable residence for a race bent on making the best of their opportunity.

III

For some time, however, matters have not been going altogether well with this best of all possible worlds. With all the advantages of civilisation brought so nearly within reach of all, there has been little but discontent and unrest all round. The trouble has been not so much with civilisation as with the men who had made it. There have been several reasons. One is that as men's advantages have multiplied, their wants have increased at a greater ratio. The poor have envied the rich, the rich have envied those richer than themselves, and the richest of all seem to be the least satisfied of all. Another reason is that those who have much have shown more inclination to get more than to share with those who

have less. In other words, the struggle of life has been intensified instead of lessening with the increasing riches of life; and this struggle has been more pitiless than ever. Not only have individuals been struggling against individuals, and class against class, but country against country, with ever intenser zeal. How to get to the top and how to keep there—this has been the all-absorbing aim of men and peoples for the last generation. More money, more power, more influence, more "room in the sun"—this has been the general ambition of men singly and in the mass. So we have had the race for wealth, for luxury, for political expansion; naval programmes, armaments, the cry for conscription; the universal conviction that this tense civilisation, built for man's benefit, would at last end in a world-struggle for supremacy, which burst on us like a bolt from the blue last August. This is the anti-climax in which the great movement of naturalistic progress of the last century has issued.

But the worst is yet to come. We are

beginning to see that whereas we had imagined ourselves as at last becoming lords of creation, nay, even as gods in the sovereignty of nature, we have really only been forging fetters for our own souls, and selling ourselves into the mere slavery of *things*. In other words, the over-development of the mind in its attempt to control matter has been won through the neglect of the spirit. It has long been noticed that as the natural life grew fuller and fuller of resources, men's spiritual vision began to wane; religion lost much of its ancient hold; its foundations seemed less and less secure; the higher world of the soul grew shadowy and remote. And the result is that the soul itself has become "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confined" in the meshes of material organisation; the machine has mastered the mechanic; and in this terrible war we find the Nemesis of a world which in its eagerness to conquer matter has starved and nearly lost its better self in the process.

And the crowning proof of all this is seen

in the discovery we have just made that the most effective development of man's inventive genius has been in the direction of perfecting the engines of destruction. Every mechanical improvement, every chemical secret, every scheme for social organisation, every contrivance of mind and brain devised by man has been suddenly commandeered by the spirit of hatred, the lust for power, the ambition for empire, and turned into a weapon of material conquest. And if, as we believe in our hearts, the arch-sinner in this matter is Germany, we must not forget that the whole civilised world is more or less participant in her guilt. The only difference between Germany and ourselves is that while she seems to have sold her soul without any doubt, compunction, or regret, into the hands of this fiend of material ambition, other nations have only half done so. At the outbreak of this war these nations suddenly awakened to the sense of the abyss towards which they were drifting, and, starting back in horror, have joined forces to crush this monster—

partly of their own creation—which suddenly confronts them in incarnate form.

IV

It has been pointed out that the Naturalistic view of the world is useful as a " methodological device " or temporary means of enquiring into the laws of Nature, with the practical end in view of learning how to control her forces in the service of man. As a philosophy of reality, however, it involves two fatal errors—an intellectual and a moral error.

From the intellectual standpoint, naturalism endeavours to explain Man in terms of a reality which he partly transcends, and which cannot therefore give a full explanation of his being. In so far as we are physical, we can explain ourselves in terms of Nature ; in so far as we are living we come under the same general laws as other living creatures ; but in so far as we are self-conscious beings no analogies drawn from the lower orders of matter and life can throw any real light

on our nature and experience. Mind cannot be expressed in terms of matter; our intellectual life is not capable of being fully explained in terms of the mentality of animals. Philosophically we must account for everything in terms of spirit in its broadest sense, as being the highest reality we know.

But it is from the ethical standpoint that Naturalism fails us most signally. It can only tell us what happens, and how it happens; it can tell us nothing about *why* it happens, nor *what ought to happen*. It can formulate no law of progress; it can give us no guarantee of progress; it can provide us with no corrective or guiding principle whereby progress may be secured. True, many exponents of Naturalism are full of moral passion, and are firm believers in the perfectibility of man and society; but in doing so they are already transcending their premises, and bringing in considerations which are surreptitiously borrowed from the spiritual or religious view of the world. Apart from faith in the goodwill and guidance of a wise and holy and loving God, Who has created

us for His glory, and Who guides the world by a devious pathway to a great and good end, there is no assurance for any of us that there is such a thing as progress. As a matter of fact all great forward movements in history are the result of great religious awakenings. When religion loses its hold on men, and the light burns low on the altar of faith, a period of degeneracy is sure to follow; ancient impulses reassert their sway; the "natural man" comes to the surface and breaks through the restraints which have hedged him in. We have been passing through such a period during the past two generations; and the result is seen in the outbreak of this calamitous and inhuman war, which has already killed or disabled millions of Europe's finest men, and which may lay as many more low ere it is done, and the evil is exorcised which has broken loose upon us with such devastating force.

V

And therefore the question is already beginning to take shape for us—what are

we going to do when this war ends, as we trust it will, in the victory of the reawakened soul of the modern world? Are its lessons going to be learnt by us? Are we going to put things at last in their right perspective and give the realm of the spirit its rightful place in our hearts? Is the sorrow, and loss, and blood, and tears which are now our daily portion to be all in vain? Are we going to allow ourselves to be overcome by evil in this struggle, or are we going to overcome the evil with our good?

The whole future of the world will depend on what answer we shall give to these questions. Unless the nations, and pre-eminently our own nation, whose action in this war is confessedly going to settle its fate, rise to the supreme call of the hour, then indeed we shall all go down together into the pit, and over the broken ruins of our civilisation the word *Ichabod* will be read in letters of fire and blood—*Ichabod*—"its glory is departed"!

VI

There is at least some hope that the world will at last realise, in the eleventh hour of its opportunity, what is wrong with it. The challenge of Christianity to it just now lies here—that a naturalistic civilisation is a contradiction in terms, just as a naturalistic philosophy is a contradiction in terms;—that the sufficiency of man is not in himself, nor in the earthly order, but in the heavenly order. Not till we enlarge our scheme of the universe till it includes the universal cause as well as the particular effect; till we recognise God as well as Nature—God *in* Nature, but God also *above* Nature—shall we begin to fulfil our place as His viceregents over Nature. Man can never be master of things till he is the servant of Him Who made him as well as all things. Man has tried to rule the world and his neighbour without recognising the claims of God, and he has made a pretty mess of things. Let him face the situation and return unto the Lord his Maker if he would keep himself

and his neighbour from mutual destruction. Let him be converted and become as a little child, if he would save his soul alive and become a real man.

And let us not exaggerate the difficulty of the task. When in the far-off ages Christianity was born it found itself in just such a world of organised materialism as we find dominant to-day. Rome was a greater and saner Germany, which succeeded in conquering the world by the exercise of ruthless force; and though its government was on the whole just, it had but one deity —Mars the God of War,—and but one law—the rule of the strong over the weak. In such a world, what chance had the new Faith with its visionary principles—faith in the Unseen, love for all mankind, hope in the triumph of good? Apparently none. Yet it spread and at last prevailed, till four centuries after Christ the apostate Emperor Julian, who had set himself to uproot the new Faith and re-establish the pagan pantheon in the temple of Christ at Constantinople, realised his hopeless task, and fell back

dying of a broken heart, crying, " O Galilean, thou hast conquered ! "

What was done then against such odds, can be done again if only the church manifests the same heroic spirit. We have this advantage over the early church. Then it had to conquer civilisation to which it was a total stranger. But now it is alive in a civilisation which is its own child, and it has only to re-assert its power in its own household. All we need is an intensifying of spiritual forces already at work,—which for a time have been pushed aside by resurgent influences of evil, but which are still full of potency and promise. Civilisation to-day is like a prodigal son brought up in a good home, who has broken away from parental control and has wandered for a time into the far country of the harlot and the swine, but has the memory of better days in his heart. Let him arise and go to his Father, and the door of welcome is still wide open.

VII

And what are we, the churches of Christ, for but to bring this prodigal back to his senses, that he may turn his face homeward?

This is our function in the coming days, when this madness shall have passed, and Europe sits down again amid the ruins of her boasted civilisation to count her gains and losses. There is a sad awakening in front of the peoples of the earth when the bill for this senseless war has to be paid. "And when he had spent all, he began to be in want." Sorrow, poverty, possibly limitless want will be our portion for a generation to come. The best blood in the world will have been spilled like water on the ground; the flower of our youth will be beneath the sod; the world will have to be carried on by a race of meaner men. It will take a century to recover the vital and material losses of this tragic crisis in the world's history.

In the immediate future we shall have

a sad time in many ways. But it will be a time of unexampled opportunity. This war, if I mistake not, will leave this poor world in a tenderer and more receptive mood than it found it. The old self-sufficiency will have gone. Trust in armaments will surely pass away with the tragedy it has caused. The Unseen World will be so full of our dearest and our best that it will recover its supreme interest for us who still remain here. And there are more positive gains which this war will bring us—if we will but learn them. Piercing through the darkness we see some bright rays of hope. May we weave them into a vision ere they pass? Three clear calls have already been sounded for us by this war.

1. The first is a *call to a simpler life.*

For more than a generation the world has gone mad after physical comfort. We have been living padded lives. We have been afraid of the heat and the cold. Our appetites have been stimulated with strange exotic foods. We have been perpetually taking thought for what we shall eat, and

what we shall drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed. And lo! our pampered youth, in order to be made fit for the stern ordeal of warfare, have been sent out from their comfortable sheltered homes to the hills and moors and open spaces of the earth, to make friends with frost and tempest, exposure and hardship; they have been fed on coarse fare; they have been put to forced marches and severe exercises; their constitutions have been tried almost to breaking point in draughty huts and frozen trenches. Instead, however, of succumbing under the strain, they have gone through a physical new birth; they have put on flesh and muscle; their blood has been renewed, their nerves braced up; and health has thrilled through brain and marrow, sinew and nerve,—health in its superabundance of joy. Here are the words of a military journalist long accustomed to the enervating life of clubs and saloons, who is giving his experience of the physical renewal which warlike exercise brought to him in the trenches:—

"Speaking for myself, I confess that I am having the time of my life. 'My bones are sweeter to me,' as Louis Stevenson said of his South Sea experiences. It is something to feel the joy of mere existence; the sense of freshness which comes with the dawn after an all night's watch; the renewed vigour of body freed from the enervating influences of lounge-chairs in clubs; the discovery that hard physical exertion is a pleasure before which softer delights pale. Many of us have suffered from 'over-cerebration and the heat of rooms,' and have been 'cultivators of restaurant fat.' War has changed all that. We live hard, and when night comes the urgent call is for bed and the dreamless slumber that follows on healthily acquired fatigue."

Is not this a lesson worth learning by all of us? The human frame was first developed not by luxury and ease and pleasure, but by the simple life, by the friendship of the open air, by incessant hardships and severities; and if it is necessary in order to recover this vigour—sapped by the easefu

ways of civilisation—to go through the exercise of military discipline, is it not worth while learning it for the purposes of peace? If this war teaches the modern world nothing but this—that health is possible to all but a small minority of the race, and that the way of health is to be found by the simple expedient of living according to nature, it will not have been fought all in vain. Once men act on that discovery, the degeneracy with which we have so often been threatened recently will give place to a race of stalwarts such as the world has not seen for many a generation.

2. If the ordeal of warfare has rediscovered for us the secret of bodily vitality, it has still more wonderfully proved the *moral resources of the ordinary man.*

What a revelation of the possibilities of heroism in the rank and file of our race has been flashed upon us during these fateful months! We had for a long time, during the piping years of peace, come to doubt whether the fibre of our national character

was not growing slack and feeble, and whether the days of real heroism lay all in the distant past. And what have we not learnt recently! Think how from every class in society a swarm of young fellows—just the ordinary youth of our schools, our colleges, our offices, our mills—ay and our street-corners—have come out at their country's call, and have gone cheerfully, gaily into battle and death, with a song on their lips and a psalm in their hearts—ready to do and to dare anything for their motherland! Think how they have borne the strain of war without flinching; how many of them, sorely wounded, have gone back into the hell of battle with renewed courage, some twice, nay thrice, knowing what is in front of them, yet never shrinking from the fiery ordeal! In the dread ordeal of war this heroic quality of the average man shines like a star out of the black midnight of horror in which it is set.

And the question here suggested is this —if the ordeal of war can waken such devotion, and courage, and self-sacrifice, is

there no means of letting loose these high moral forces in times of peace? Two main fountains of heroism are in all of us—*patriotism*, which is the symbol of our natural affection for home and country,—and *religion*, the symbol of our spiritual affections and heavenly ideals. War lets loose the flowing stream of patriotism as nothing else can do; God's spirit in times of awakening and revival the stream of spiritual heroism. *Is it not time our religion became heroic again?* Are there no enemies at home, nay within us, on which we can expend our moral enthusiasm, our religious zeal, our spiritual idealism? "We fight not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against hosts of wickedness in high places, against the world-rulers of this darkness." Let us pray God that when the war is over, nay before then if it please Him, the still and tepid atmosphere of our recent religious lives may give place to a springtime of spiritual reality and of heroic endeavour! When our lads come home from the war, are our churches going to be worthy

homes for such heroes, or graves in which to bury their awakened spiritual vitality? They will need all we can do for them, by way of comfort, reinforcement, healing, and refreshment, and we must give them high tasks as well as high consolations. Let it not be said by them that when they came back hungering for the bread of life, our churches gave them only a stone of formality, and became dormitories in which to lull their awakened souls to sleep again, on the way to death!

3. Again, shall we not learn something of spiritual value from the *wonderful effectiveness of military organisation for the utilisation of the forces of ordered discipline and obedience?* The question is this—can we not shape out a better discipline of the *social forces of peace* for purposes of national reform and betterment?

What makes the soldier effective is the discipline of the army. He is taught to take his place in the ranks, to keep step with his fellows, to work in subordination to those who lead and guide and direct his move-

ments, to obey the word of command with unflinching obedience, even though it may lead him to certain death. Shall this be true of men under the grim conditions of war, and ineffective for the higher loyalties of peace? Shall we never learn that man's chief happiness—and all his possibilities of good—are to be found not in the lawless freedom and independence of the individual life, but in the subordination of self and its imperious lusts to the common good, to social welfare, to spiritual obedience? There is no more ominous sign of the times as regards British character than the loss of the principle of discipline in religious, social and political life. Obedience is dying out of the modern world; self-will is taking its place as the impelling motive of conduct; every man desires above all things to do that which is right in his own eyes. It is this fact which gives its plausibility to the cry for conscription that was so often raised before this war broke out, and is again beginning to sound forth. It is the cause of the painful spectacle of industrial anarchy

and malingering which recently moved the Government to drastic action *re* the slackness of operatives in the manufacture of munitions of war. Does it not emphasise the imperative call for a return to those times of better discipline in home life, in church life, and in the life of the nation at large, which marked our former history? If the soldier's highest military virtues—obedience to his commander, and loyalty to his cause—alone can win victories and sustain defeats without flinching, is it not time to realise that this is but a parable of what is due from us to our Blessed Lord, and of the loyalty we owe to His cause? There are innumerable difficulties and problems in our social, industrial and political life which can be solved, and solved only, by a wide development of the spirit of obedience, by loyal co-operation with our fellows, by the elimination of social selfishness and personal ambition; and the tragic experiences of this war ought to be as God's finger pointing in that direction. The nation which learns to obey the moral and social

imperative with the same inner loyalty that the soldier shows to the commander who regulates his movements, and the cause that commands his allegiance even unto death, will assuredly be the nation of the future, the pioneer of the better time, the harbinger of the New Heavens—home of bright ideals,—and of the New Earth, where these ideals shall one day strike root and bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. This is the Challenge of Christianity to Modern Civilisation.

CHAPTER III

THE CHALLENGE TO MORALITY—THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

WHAT is the relation of Might and Right in the ethical code of Christianity? This has always been a vexed question for Christian moralists, and has probably caused more perplexity and heart-burning among truly religious and devout people than any other ethical problem. The object of this chapter is to suggest, and if possible to prove, that the question itself is based on a misunderstanding, and involves a false antithesis so obvious that most of our perplexities ought to vanish with its exposition.

I

It has been taken for granted by a large and possibly increasing number of devout people that the ethic of Jesus is not only

pacific, but essentially pacifist in character; that it allows no one who owns allegiance to it to resort to force for any purpose whatever, even in self-defence, whether it be the case of an individual or of a nation; and that when Jesus said "Resist not evil" He was uttering an unqualified and universal principle for the guidance of His followers, collectively as well as individually, for all times and circumstances. Over against this idealist attitude of many of His best followers and disciples in all ages stands the stubborn fact that no self-contained community calling itself Christian has ever acted literally on this principle, and that while the progress of good owes an imperishable debt to those who have dared personally to act *within* a community on lines of non-resistance, no nation, however Christian in spirit, has even so much as attempted to follow this commandment as a binding rule for itself collectively. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that the refusal to apply the pacifist passages in the Sermon on the Mount to the case of a community or nation

is right; it is indeed denounced by many as a lamentable sign of moral failure. It does, however, raise the question very seriously whether, under the conditions of life presented to us in history, and in the affairs of to-day, pacifists are right in taking for granted that what is incumbent on an individual witnessing to a principle at the possible cost of his own life, is also intended to apply to society, one of whose highest functions is to safeguard the interests of the individuals composing it. And the position I wish to develop in this chapter is this—that, while the duty of non-resistance to evil *is* a duty incumbent on every Christian disciple, as an individual, when his own interests alone are involved, it does not apply to him when attacked in his representative capacity as a citizen, whose rights he holds in trust for others as well as for himself (witness Paul's appeal to Cæsar), and that it does not apply to a nation as a whole, which holds in trust the rights of its individual citizens. If this distinction between individual and social ethics can

be substantiated, and if it is realised in all its bearings, I believe we have the key that unlocks the mazy problem of non-resistance, and many a troubled conscience would be eased of its perplexity. For lack of this distinction, too, I venture to think, there has been much ill-considered and mischievous talk on Britain's duty as a Christian nation in this crisis by many mistaken though well-meaning people—ill-considered because untrue to facts, mischievous because of its evil effects in encouraging an implacable and brutal enemy, and in discounting the whole-heartedness and conviction which can alone bring this war to a successful and righteous conclusion. For it is true of communities as well as individual persons, that "what is not of faith is *sin*."

II

In the first place, let us endeavour to define our terms—might and right—in their mutual relations.

By might is meant the principle of force

or compulsion as applied to the life of other people. The force in question is simply the force of will-power—individual or collective. And by right is meant righteous or just relations between individuals within a community and between communities as collective individuals. We have only to keep clearly in mind that might in this connection always means will-power, to see how hollow is the dualism so often drawn between might and right. There is no such dualism in the nature of things. Will-power is neither moral nor immoral in itself, but always in virtue of the motives that actuate it, and of the ends to which it is directed. Might becomes part of the executive machinery of right when used to make right possible, and to safeguard its interests in a community; it becomes a part of the instrumentality of evil when directed to the committal of wrong, or towards hindering the freedom of others to do right. A man can force himself by an act of sheer will-power to do right against any and every impulse to do wrong; and

while he can never force others to do right —for virtuous action must always be free and self-chosen in order to be virtuous at all—he can often prevent them from doing wrong by the exercise of superior will-power or force. Similarly the organised will-power of society, while it can never produce virtuous citizens, can and does often prevent vicious citizens from committing crimes, or acting to the detriment of others.

I will venture to go further than this, and affirm confidently that in a mixed society composed partly of men and women who are pledged to evil, selfish, and criminal ways, and who do not acknowledge the rights of others, some organised form of force is absolutely essential in order to hold them in check and prevent them from criminal action—i.e. action inimical to the general well-being. This is the principle behind law and government in an ordered community, without which, indeed, no community can possibly maintain itself against the disruptive forces always present within it. True, the will-power of an undeveloped

or degenerate community may be exercised as selfishly and tyrannically as that of any individual within it. History tells us of innumerable cases where a community by the exercise of its collective will has hindered the progress of right as well as sanctioned the committal of wrong; but that, however often it may happen, is only an abnormal use of a normal function. In such cases it is right on the part of an individual or a minority to resist the communal will on behalf of the higher interests of the community itself, *which is also an exercise of a form of compulsion.* This may be done in either of two ways—by *heroic rebellion*, as in the case of the Puritans against the tyranny of Charles I, or by *heroic passive resistance* to the point of martyrdom, as in the case of the Protestant and Brownist martyrs in the time of Mary. We may say broadly that the most precious of our liberties have all been won by one or other or both of these methods of resistance to wrongful authority. Both the heroic rebel and the saintly martyr are

inspired by the same motive; they both win by suffering on behalf of right; and they both cause suffering to others as well as to themselves. Whether in any particular case a man shall actively rebel against wrong with a view of vindicating right in a community, or passively suffer wrong to do its worst with a view of defeating it, is a question that cannot be determined by *a priori* considerations; what I am concerned to point out is that in either case a man is using a form of compulsion to gain his ends; in the one case in order actively to break the power of an iniquitous system of tyranny; in the other by forcing that system to unmask its true nature through suffering unjust exactions, imprisonment, and death at its hands,—that so the moral forces of the community may be roused to break it down.

III

The true relation of might and right within a community thus comes into clearer light. *The ethical progress of mankind depends*

not on weakening the will to power, but on the moralising of its forces. Subjectively it involves the regulation of the selfish impulses under the ordered service of the higher man; objectively it involves the affirmation of the communal will against attack, in the interests of individual citizens. A progressively moralised community will gradually need less and less of the arm of force for the safeguarding of its interests, but until the moralising process is complete there will always be need of some effective background of forceful action, no longer as the enemy, but as the guardian of the social moral imperative.

IV

The critical question in this brief summary of social ethics comes here—what function does the principle of force or compulsion (which always involves the liability to accept the last great arbitrament of war) fulfil in international relationships?

To begin with, we must set aside altogether Treitschke's dictum that a nation as such

can do no wrong to another, on the ground that there is no higher tribunal than its own standards to which it can appeal. The nation is not the last unit of society. Above it there is, in the first place, the community of civilised nations, and above all is the social unit of the race as a whole. The interests of humanity as a whole thus constitute the last great court of appeal for nations as well as individuals. On the basis of this an international code of laws has gradually shaped itself into more or less coherent form among civilised nations during the last few centuries. It has not yet fashioned for itself an effective instrument of enforcement, but of late we had been hoping, what with multiplying arbitration treaties, Hague conferences, and other methods of education, that the nations were gradually coming to recognise the authority of the same moral laws as govern the relations of lesser social aggregates. Germany's open and shameless repudiation of this international code is a throw-back of several centuries in international ethical

evolution. For lack of a recognised international tribunal capable of enforcing its sanctions, the several nations threatened were thus forced either to permit a grievous wrong to be committed or to resist her unprovoked aggression to the point of war.

V

But, says the Pacifist, there are two ways of meeting even such a case as this. There is the way of active resistance—which Britain has chosen; and there is the way of passive resistance—the way of the Cross—which she did not choose. If we had, at the critical moment, blown up or surrendered our battleships, disbanded our army, and abandoned ourselves as well as Belgium to a common fate rather than accept the gauge of battle, the moral effect of such an act of self-surrender—such is the Pacifist contention—would have been immediate and conclusive on the consciousness of mankind; and even if we had been outraged as Belgium was outraged, Germany in the hour of her

victory would have been broken on the rock of the world's repudiation. This idea has been expressed by more than one strong and earnest exponent of the Pacifist ideal, and it lies behind a great deal of the spiritual disquietude and unrest of the time. In any case, here is a suggestion so concordant with the innermost spirit of the Christian faith in its individual aspects that we dare not ignore, much less pour scorn upon it. What shall we say to it ?

1. In the first place, we must remember the distinction I have endeavoured already to point out—that between the moral responsibility of an individual bent on being faithful to a personal ideal at the cost of his own life, and that of a community—or its representatives—whose responsibility is primarily to safeguard the welfare of its individual citizens. It is my duty as an individual to suffer wrong with meekness and patience; but it is not my duty to allow wrong to be committed to a member of my family, whose welfare, liberty and right it is my duty to safeguard and defend.

Moreover, while personal wrong may be suffered by an individual in his private capacity, it is his duty to resist wrong done to himself as a member of society, for that is an offence not against him, but against public order, which it is his duty to vindicate by every means in his power. And it is because this war involves an attack against international public order and right, especially the right of small nations, that it is for us a holy war. England might have surrendered many things in order to avoid it; but she would be recreant to her highest duty if she had permitted German aggressiveness to overrun the world with her pretended crusade of culture.

2. Secondly, even if an act of self-sacrifice such as is suggested by the Pacifist attitude were ideally incumbent on a whole nation at a certain stage of international evolution, that situation has clearly not yet arrived. When the example of the Cross is brought before us we must remember that that great consummation took place "in the fullness of time," and "when all things

were ready." If this means anything it must mean that even Christ could not have fulfilled His purpose except at a certain chosen time and place, and at a certain stage in the world's history. Sinai must precede Calvary. Israel's long history and discipline, her wars and captivities, her Diaspora (or scattering among the nations), must have taken place, and the moral development of the environing nations themselves must have come to a certain ripeness before it behoved "Christ to suffer" and "enter into His glory." Some indeed seem more or less strongly to hold that the time has come for some such colossal act of national self-sacrifice, with a view to vindicating what Bushnell calls the "efficacy of the passive virtues." I have tried to imagine what would have been the effect on the moral sense of mankind if Belgium, for instance, had permitted herself to be overrun without resistance by the German armies instead of doing as she did—braving in heroic resistance the unequal might of the Germanic hosts. Can

there be any doubt that it would have been inevitably attributed to moral cowardice? Was it not the magnificent way she took her courage in her hands and broke the shock of that first terrific onset that awoke the conscience of this nation, and united the Empire in one splendid determination to come to her rescue in the name of our common humanity? I will not say that Germany is the only nation responsible for the outbreak of this war; the whole civilised world is partly responsible for it, and we are all reaping a harvest of blood and tears for our collective sins; but I do venture to affirm most earnestly that Belgium's act was one of the most heroically daring the world has ever seen, and that, in taking her side whole-heartedly, Britain has done one of the most blameless, nay, the very noblest, thing in her history.

8. In order to realise the importance of time and place and circumstance in ethical relations, let me remind the reader, by way of illustration, of two events in our recent history in South Africa. It is generally

recognised that Mr. Gladstone's surrender to the Boers after the defeat of Majuba Hill was, in its intention, one of the most Christian, and, in its practical consequences, one of the most mistaken acts of generosity in the annals of the nation; Christian because we had abundant resources at hand to vindicate the prowess of Britain against a tiny people had we chosen to continue the war; mistaken because it was taken by the Boers in their then temper to be a proof, not of Britain's generosity, but of her weakness. Nothing could be nobler than Mr. Gladstone's motive and intention; nothing could have been more disastrous than its result in fostering the pride and vanity of the Boers. Now, compare that act of generosity with the still greater generosity of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman in giving back their practical freedom to the Boers in 1906, and its amazing success. Whence came the difference in the effects of the two policies? It was the untimeliness of the one, for the Boers were not morally prepared for Mr. Gladstone's act of surrender;

it was the timeliness of the other, when they had been disciplined by the issues of the war of 1900–2, so that the moral significance of the act could not be misunderstood. The first act made another war almost inevitable in order to undo its mischief; the second made a future war with the Boers unthinkable, and has made them rally to our flag in the present crisis because they have for ever made it their own.

4. In John Stuart Mill's precious little book on *Liberty*, there is a passage which long ago burnt itself into my memory, and I will venture to apply it to the present situation.

> "The dictum," he says, "that truth [and, we may add, any other form of good] always triumphs over persecution, is one of those pleasant falsehoods which men repeat after one another until they pass into commonplaces, but which experience refutes. History teems with instances of truth put down by persecution. If not suppressed for ever, it may be put back for centuries. To speak only of religious persecution, the Reformation

broke out at least twenty times before Luther, and was put down. Arnold of Brescia was put down. Fra Dolcino was put down. Savonarola was put down. The Lollards were put down. The Hussites were put down. . . . In Spain, Italy, Flanders, the Austrian Empire, Protestantism was rooted out; and most likely it would have been so in England had Mary lived or Elizabeth died. *Persecution has always succeeded save where heretics were too strong a party to be effectually persecuted.* . . . It is a piece of idle sentimentality that truth merely as truth has any inherent power denied to error of prevailing against the dungeon and the stake. Men are not more zealous for truth than they often are for error, and a sufficient application of legal or even of social penalties will generally succeed in stopping the propagation of either" (World's Classics Ed., pp. 36, 37).

What is here held to be applicable to truth is no less applicable to right and justice and social and international interests. These have no inherent power to withstand the forces of oppression except as they

clothe themselves in a resistant and conquering public opinion, and in institutions strong enough to withstand every attack. This is how every great possession of mankind, whether it be religious truth, or social liberty, or international right, has so far won its way and prevailed, and what has won these things—which is organised and *moralised* will-power—can alone maintain them against the forces of reaction and decadence. And this, I affirm once more, is what we are doing to-day in Flanders, and Posen, and Gallipoli. For this the manhood of three great nations is offering itself sacrificially on the altar of endurance and suffering; for this hundreds of thousands of Christian families in our churches are giving their dearest sons freely to adventure their lives in a great cause; for this the whole nation is bracing up its last reserves of moral effort and spiritual endurance, nothing doubting; and for this high end we can freely and in full faith pray for a great and enduring victory.

VI

And now, while earnestly putting forth these thoughts on the relation of the Christian Ethic to War on its positive side, and to this war in particular, we must not stop there. So far we have been trying to find some kind of *concordat* between Christianity and the fact that we are forced to maintain the principles of righteousness, liberty and true progress, even at the cost of the " dread arbitrament of war " with its panoply of sword and shell, of dreadnought and military aeroplane. We believe that it is at root a moral compulsion which we are obeying, and not a merely political or even national one. It is laid upon us to put power into the arm of right, to invest justice with might, to safeguard the highest interests of humanity with conquering force. Let us not forget, however, that what makes this necessary is the moral decadence of the modern world. It is because our civilisation as a whole is unchristian that this war has come to pass. Granted that Germany is

the chief sinner; that it is her insolent plot against the liberties of humanity which has brought this evil to pass; can *any* nation in Europe to-day look into the face of Jesus Christ and plead itself guiltless of sharing in that temper and attitude towards other nations which have made this inhuman struggle inevitable? That would be the saddest indication possible of moral blindness. The whole civilised world is really, if indirectly, accomplice in this crime. Prussianism is only a virulent form of a poison which has been slowly but surely infecting the blood of the race. There has been a steady decline in the standards of international action during the past generation. The Christian Ideal has been pronounced a counsel of perfection, beautiful as a vision, but utterly impracticable for the workaday world. *So it is, in the present condition of the world.* But it is just the condemnation of the world that this should be so. When we say that the Sermon on the Mount is a lovely dream, and this after two thousand years of opportunity to turn that dream

into reality, we are passing judgment not on that matchless utterance of the Master, but on our own sinful hearts as a race. It was a dream when first spoken; but if the spirit of that vision had been received into the heart of humanity, and if obedience had been tendered to it by the nations, would it have remained a dream for so long? Why, if men had thrown half as much heroism into the endeavour to turn that Divine vision into fact as they have shown in waging the wars of history, it would long ago have become a solid and irresistible Fact, and war would long since have become impossible. Where now we see suspicion, there would have been trust; where now we find jealousy, there would have been cordial recognition of the rights of others; where now we see envy, malice, strife, chicanery and deceit, there would have been generous emulation and the mutual interchange of benefits among the nations of the world.

There has been a steady deterioration in the standards of international morality

during the past two generations. The lofty aspirations of the early Victorian era for the co-operation of the chief European nations in the interests of a world-wide and humane civilisation, which found its industrial expression in the Exhibition of 1851, and its moral expression in the passionate advocacy of the rights of the Balkan States when under the heel of Turkey through the eloquent tongue and pen of Gladstone, have changed into a cynical indifference to the interests of persecuted races, which have been too often callously used as pawns in the high diplomatic game of the greater nations. This change became specially evident during the Armenian massacres of 1894–6, when almost a whole people were allowed to die without protest from the six great European Powers, who by a single concerted threat to Turkey could have saved them, but who uttered no word of effective remonstrance. The conscience of Europe died in that hour, and has not yet come to a resurrection. From that time on, as a recent writer has expressed it, "States-

men were prepared to set in motion the vast forces at their disposal for national aims, however trumpery, to avenge national injuries however slight; but faith, honour, humanity, and the claims of co-religionists were for them words without effect." Following fast on the heels of this tragedy came the Turko-Greek War, then the Cuban War, then the three years' conflict with the Boers in South Africa, and the shameful concerted attack on China in 1900. A little later we find ourselves watching the gigantic struggle in Manchuria between Russia and Japan, revolutions in Turkey, Persia, and Portugal, and the Young Turk movement. These at first sight seemed like signs of recovery, and hopes were entertained that even Turkey was not beyond resurrection into a new life. But it was soon clear that these uprisings had no sufficient moral dynamic behind them to master the reactionary and disruptive forces opposing them, and they have one and all proved abortive and confused in their issues. It is this loss of moral idealism among the

nations that has given its opportunity for the reactionary forces of the German Empire to gather way and fling themselves on the nations which alone stood in the way of their triumph. It is even now not yet certain whether the reawakened moral spirit of these nations has enough reserves of power and patience to resist these forces successfully. They are fighting in the first place for their political existence as free nations; but they are fighting for more than that. The struggle is between a recrudescent and self-centred Paganism in international affairs, and a Christian ethical standard of international life, in which all nations and men shall be free to live their lives, and to fulfil their individual functions. And the *Christian standard* is the *Christian spirit of love and goodwill*, which can be manifested in the relations of peoples equally with those of individuals, and become the universal bond between all the nations and races of the earth if only the contrary spirit of suspicion, jealousy, and all uncharitableness were finally ousted

from the heart of mankind, and a healthy sense of universal interdependence, and mutual benefit were made the guiding principle of human life.

And here we meet the challenge of Christianity on its ethical as we have already done on the philosophical ground. It comes to us on the basis of our universal relation to the great Father-God revealed in Jesus Christ, of whom the ancient psalmist sang, "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne," of whom Paul said that He has "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Our common origin in God, our common human nature, our common destiny as a race, all demand recognition as deeper realities than those secondary aspects of human life which cause them to divide into tribes and races, and to deal with each other as at root alien and antagonistic. When Christianity first dawned on the world, it was hailed by its chiefest apostle as the great solvent of all racial antipathies and rivalries. Speaking of the

sharp antagonisms dividing the ancient world St. Paul says :—

> "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Ephes. ii. 11–17).

Here we have the charter of universal peace and goodwill, because it reveals the

fundamental unity of mankind in the gospel of Christ. All men are heirs of the same promise; they are inheritors of the same heavenly grace; they are the subjects of the same spiritual redemption; they are the heirs of the same blessed immortality. This is ideally what all men are here and now; it is what they *would* be if only they had received the Gospel into their hearts; it is what they *will* be when they realise their spiritual solidarity in Him who died to redeem them with His precious blood. But not till then. *A universal Christianity is the only permanent ground of guarantee of a universal and abiding peace.*

CHAPTER IV

THE CHALLENGE TO THE HOME— THE PROBLEM OF POPULATION

I

THE genial Vicar of Wakefield, with secret thoughts on marriage bent, gave it as his confident opinion that the honest man who married and brought up a large family would do more service to his country than he who continued to live a single life all his days, and only talked of population. Accordingly he made good his word, and married, and in due course was blessed with a tolerably large family. It is true he underwent some hard experiences with some of its members, and he and his good helpmate at times were somewhat pinched in circumstances, but everything worked out fairly right at last. He claimed at the end of the day that he was at least as well off as a man who had remained single and spent all on himself;

and he had in addition continued his name in the coming generation, and was rich in the affection of his many descendants.

Goldsmith, in giving us this picture of life in the eighteenth century, was holding the mirror up to nature. During that period and down to within living memory, the national sentiment was strongly in favour of large families, not only in this country but throughout Europe, and probably throughout the civilised world. This vigorous family ideal can be traced back to very early times, and was specially pronounced in Old Testament times among the Hebrew people. At the period when Psalm 127 was written the author could confidently say, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of the mighty man; so are children of youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." Doubtless in these picturesque and classic words he was giving voice to the general and healthy

sentiment of his day and generation. But long before this, reaching far back indeed into legendary times, there are sufficient traces of the same attitude. Among the patriarchs there was clearly a passionate desire for abundant offspring; a childless woman was a disgrace and despised woman; a childless man felt himself shamed by providence. In the stories of Abraham and Sara, Jacob and Rachel, we see the painful situation created by prolonged childlessness; we see also that it was held to be the bounden duty of a man to procure children through concubines if his wife was barren. Farther back still we find the legend of Onan, in which the refusal to produce offspring from a brother's widow gave its name to a typical sin held in execration by all succeeding generations. From these Old Testament sources, as well as from higher considerations, we find that Christian nations in later times inherited a sense of the sacredness of the procreative function, the sanctity of the family instinct, and the duty of man and wife at the cost of straitened means, and

even of penury, to welcome a succession of little ones as long as Nature permitted. In every land and nation, so long as this sentiment prevailed, there was little sexual vice, and any attempt at the artificial restriction of the family was considered a grave offence against nature and a shameful sin against God. Especially among agricultural peoples all over the world do we find this so. The writer himself springs from such a stock. Among the farming population of Wales, up till quite recently, it was considered an honour to a woman that she should be the mother of many sons and daughters. He well remembers in his childhood noting with what pride certain women would usher their procession of six or eight children into the family pew at divine service, and with what envy she would be regarded by such of her neighbours as were denied the privilege of abundant fruitfulness. And what is true of Wales was true of Scotland, Ireland, and rural England up to a generation ago. How profound, indeed, this sentiment was throughout the whole nation was manifested during

the prosecution of Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Annie Besant in the 'eighties of last century, for publishing a book on certain methods of securing the artificial restriction of families. I believe that from a legal standpoint such a custom is still a serious and punishable offence.

II

There are many revolutions in thought, sentiment, and ideals that have taken place during the past generation; but there is probably none that is calculated to produce more momentous issues for the future of the race than that which has passed over the civilised world in this matter. Almost suddenly, like a climatic change, the whole civilised world seems to have altered its mind as to the desirability of large families. The sentiment in question has not been argued out of men's minds; it seems simply to have faded away. Nor is it that the parental instinct has disappeared; so far as I know childlessness is still deplored by

and in young married people as an abnormality in others and a sore trial for themselves; the love of children indeed is probably as intense as ever; but it is definitely restricted in scope. The average man and woman of to-day want only two or at most three children; and rather than have any more they will outrage their nature and deny the reproductive instinct its freedom of action, and this is done not wantonly, nor thoughtlessly, nor with secret compunction, but deliberately, with intention, and as a reasoned and settled policy. This appears as a widespread and spontaneous movement, which has successively afflicted the rich, the middle classes, and the poor; the country man and the city dweller; the cultured and the ignorant; the religious and the agnostic or indifferentist. There must be a very widespread cause, or causes, for so universal and stupendous a fact.

III

1. We note in the first place that this change of attitude is not due to any recru-

descence of belief in the sanctity of the celibate life. The notion that virginity in man and woman is a mark of greater spirituality may still exist in Roman Catholic circles; it has certainly not infected Protestant circles of thought, and is alien from the naturalistic creed; still more so from the point of view of the modern as it was from the ancient Jewish religion. Possibly some pessimists follow out their creed consistently enough to think it a crime to reproduce a race doomed to misery and ultimate extinction. And there may be cases of embittered socialists, here and there, who are so much out of tune with their environment as to think the world in its present social condition so unfair to the class they belong to, that they prefer not to bring children into such an environment till things improve. But on the whole, this phenomenon is too widespread to be put down to any reasoned world-view; still less to that particular view of life I have just mentioned—that to abstain from marriage is a mark of superior virtue.

2. Nor is this change due to any altered

attitude towards the natural and imperious instinct of sex. The modern man and woman are not infected with any sense of repugnance to one another, or to the idea of marriage as such. Probably the contrary is true. Artificial restrictions to reproduction are resorted to not for the sake of greater continence, but for the opposite reason. It is best to face this issue plainly. Man has been realising his power to control natural processes in a thousand ways during the last few generations. At last he has found the means of controlling the natural operation of the life-force which has swept up into him from the lower orders, and instead of being content to be its instinctive channel, he aspires to be its master and lord. Formerly married people had many children because they could not help themselves; now they mean to have just as many as they choose to have, and no more. If this power were exercised from the highest motives, and in the interests of the highest ideals, there would be nothing here to arouse solicitude; for man is here to conquer his environment,

and to direct the forces of the world, physical, vital, social, in the line of his true interests. The present source of anxiety is found in the widespread prevalence of hedonistic tendencies, in the interests of which man's control over nature, as we have already seen, is being exploited for selfish ends in many directions,—and not in the least in the direction of restricting the natural growth of population.

IV

We pass on to more positive reasons.

1. We find the first in a fact already incidentally referred to—a growing desire to enjoy life without incurring any unpleasant effects. The modern man is passionately desirous to get out of life all he can, and at as little cost as may be. He is growingly conscious of the brevity of life, of its great possibilities while it lasts, and of its many limitations. How to exploit this gift to the full, and pay as small a price as possible, seems to be the prevailing ideal of many people. *Carpe diem!* We must, it is true,

recognise a growing prudence in modern life, as well as a growing hedonism. Most men and women to-day are less vicious than many of their forebears. But if they can squeeze their orange dry without tasting the bitter rind, they will do so, and think well of themselves for it.

2. Probably this tendency of which I speak is—in part—one of the untoward effects of the great Feminist movement of the present day. Woman, far more than man, is viewing the universe with new eyes. She is in revolt not only against the social and political limitations of her sex, which are removable, but against its organic and physiological limitations and disabilities, which hitherto have been thought to be irremovable. She grudges man his superior strength, his larger brain, his tougher fibre, and especially his immunity from the pangs and perils of childbirth. She has awakened to the fact that sexual privilege has been very unequally distributed; and that she is sadly handicapped in the race for health, enjoyment and public activity by this fact.

Probably in a dumb and inarticulate way she has rebelled against her fate for long ages; now she has found her voice, and it is raised in protest in no measured terms. In addition to this she has parted from the traditional idea that her function is to be restricted to the uneventful and humdrum duties of the household. Not only is she no longer satisfied to be man's plaything or slave; she aspires to be his equal, his companion, and his rival in the wider struggles, activities, and satisfactions of life. This she sees to be incompatible with the continued cares and disabilities of childbearing. And so, while recognising that she must submit to that ordeal in order that the race may continue, and that her maternal instincts may be satisfied, she is determined to get through this organic function as quickly as may be, and to spend the rest of her life in the enjoyment of as many of these larger male privileges as she can command. Let us not be hard on the "weaker vessel" for this passionate protest against what appears very much like an organic injustice. It is easy to

fulminate against her newly expressed demand for a more equal fate; but it would be well to put ourselves sometimes in the woman's place. A doctor told the writer—a little cynically perhaps—that in his opinion, if husband and wife had to take turns at childbearing, and the wife took first turn, there would never be more than three children in any family; while if the husband took first turn there would never be more than two. Be this as it may, we are face to face as a civilised world with a widespread revolt against motherhood. How far this is likely to go it is impossible to tell. An American has assured me that in certain fashionable classes of society in the States it is not infrequently made a condition by the woman on promising to marry a man, that she is to be definitely immune from childbearing. If this became general, it would of course amount to race suicide. Probably things would right themselves before it came to that, and a healthy revulsion would restore the balance. Meanwhile, we must recognise that this Feminist movement has

an important bearing on the problem of population.

V

We pass to the *social* aspect of the question. Here we undoubtedly find an immense and growing problem. The revolt against motherhood is unquestionably largely due to the ever-increasing pressure of social life, and to the ever-deepening repugnance to poverty and its disabilities. And by poverty in this connection is meant not absolute, but comparative poverty. To be poor nowadays means, not to be in want of the necessaries of life, but to be unable to keep up a customary standard of comfort on a certain fixed income. From this point of view, men may be poor while in possession of an income which to those accustomed to a simpler scale of life would be considered affluence. Men, and especially women, do not willingly lower their standard of comfort. To be obliged to do so is the greatest social trial any of us can undergo; and women feel this experience far more than men. It is also a

peculiarity of our modern world-view, that we are intensely anxious to start our children at the point of social advantage secured by our hereditary or acquired position in society. This means that they must be dressed, cared-for, and educated in a certain way; and in most cases that a certain sum of money must be somehow found to enable them to follow a calling which will give them an equal or better social standing than their parents. Every child thus means a definitely larger call on our monetary resources. All of which becomes a powerful argument for the restriction of families to the two or three or four which is the largest number our means will permit us to raise up adequately for their place in life, without undue sacrifice of personal comfort for ourselves, or too severe a handicap for the children in fighting their way up. This is probably the most frequent argument by which men and women justify their refusal to have as many children as nature permits them to have. This argument is clearly based on the assumption that for children to be forced to undergo the disabilities of

comparative poverty, and to be obliged to struggle for their place in society is an evil. This assumption is unwarranted by the facts of life. A wide survey of these facts proves conclusively that the vast majority of the men and women who do well in life have had to undergo severe disabilities in early life, and were taught to put forth the best that was in them under the salutary compulsion of necessity. It is notorious that children belonging to large families do better on the whole with their life chances than those who have been born " with silver spoons in their mouths," and for whom everything has been made easy in their youth. It is only disabling poverty, i.e. such poverty as blocks the way to any real chance of developing one's powers, which is to be deplored. Comparative poverty has always been a stimulant and an incentive when accompanied by a high-minded family tradition, and a quickening early training.

VI

It is impossible to complete the reasons for the change of attitude in question without referring to its *religious* aspects. From savage times mankind has always recognised the creative hand of the deity in the function of reproduction, and almost all religions have a central place for its expression in their ceremonial customs, sacrifices, and liturgical services. At times the elaborate ceremonies associated with the religious recognition of this function have led to shameful sensual practices; but it is now being recognised by all anthropologists that these are debased aspects of a profoundly religious instinct. In our own faith marriage is a sacrament, i.e. it is recognised as a religious act leading to a religious relationship, which is the starting-point of family life in each generation. Throughout the ages this fact has profoundly affected the sentiment bearing on the marital bond; it has safeguarded the purity of family life, and made faithfulness between man and wife one of the fundamental

religious virtues. Not only so, but it has made the very act of conception a holy thing ; and caused any interference with it before or after to be considered a grave and unnatural offence. The laws of most modern nations reflect this feeling, and make abortion an indictable offence open to severest punishment. All this has reacted profoundly on the attitude taken up towards any interference with the natural results of marital relations, except under strict medical advice.

This being so, it is no wonder that the new point of view towards procreation, as a matter under the free control of man and wife, has but slowly made way among those who definitely belong to the religious classes. That it has done so with ever-increasing momentum recently is only another and subtle proof that religion has for the time lost some of its central sanctions even for the profoundly religious. I have no doubt whatever that one fact which accounts for this is a waning sense of the divine omnipresence in the most secret places and relationships of life. As a purifying and

restraining influence this belief had a tremendous influence on the secret lives and inner thoughts of our forefathers, and that it no longer holds its place in the thoughts of many, largely accounts not only for the practice of preventing conception, but for many other signs of decadence in human life.

VII

We have now briefly enumerated most of the causes which account for the interference with the natural rate of human reproduction in recent times. Before we pass on to the later developments of my argument it would be well to face the physiological aspect of the problem.

And what has here to be emphasised is that from a physiological point of view any direct interference with the results of the married relation is an unnatural act. Nature has evolved the passional side of this function for the one and only purpose of safeguarding the principle of reproduction. Through all the kīngdoms of life

she has exhausted the possibilities of form in the various living species, and much mutual adaptation and passional feeling has been evolved with this one end in view. Organic evolution in the proper sense of the term, biologists are at one in telling us, began only with the appearance of sex. Till then reproduction meant simply repetition. The first rung of the stairway of life was not mounted till God created "male and female." From that moment on life began its upward march, its wonderful differentiations, its slow but sure progress from the simple to the complex, from the first scarcely organised monad to the infinite variety and rich multiplicity of organic existence as we now see it on earth. And in order to secure this pathway of progress we find an imperious instinct implanted in flower and insect, in bird, and beast, and man, to be "fruitful and multiply and to fill the earth," each after its kind. All the attraction of sex, the glamour of love-making and mating, the forms and colours of flowers, the song of birds, the efflorescence of form and tint,

feather and fur of animals, the sprouting of tusk and antler and other offensive and defensive weapons among male mammals —all these artistic and organic manifestations of life during the period of reproduction are but manifestations of Nature's ingenuity in securing the continuance and progress of life through the mating of male and female; with the result that nothing is more sure from season to season, and from generation to generation, than that every living thing will mate at the proper time in order to fulfil this function; if indeed any race of living beings once lost this instinct that generation would see the end of its special form of life on earth. And in all the kingdoms of nature we nowhere find that there is the slightest interference, or possibility of conscious interference, with this instinct till man appears. He alone, through the exercise of his rational and self-conscious reasoning powers, is able to distinguish between cause and effect, and in this case to attempt to separate between the two, that he may, presumably, secure

the fulfilment of the one without incurring the so-called penalty of the other. The fact that this is a drastic interference with a natural function should at least make us pause before we justify it. To do so is to claim a wisdom above that immanent in Nature herself. If this can be proved, well and good; but we must be well assured that we are not incurring more serious penalties than we know in doing so.

VIII

The only rational justification attempted for this interference with a natural function, is based on the Malthusian contention that the natural rate of reproduction in man and beast is faster than the possibilities of adequate sustenance. The book in which this argument was formulated appeared in its mature form in 1803. Its aim was good—to unfold the conditions of happy social and personal life in a community; and it is to be noted that Malthus himself was an estimable and high-minded man, who

must be in no sense associated with the questionable development of his argument in other hands. His contention was that life is so prolific in Nature that the means of sustenance are never equal to the number of organisms produced, so that the balance of life at any period and in all species can only be maintained by the destruction of the vast majority of incipient organisms. In this position the latest science thoroughly upholds him; indeed it has greatly strengthened his argument. Malthus, however, applies this argument without qualification to the human race; and in doing so he ignores essential facts. He makes no allowance, for instance, for the fact that man is not the mere slave of his environment, but has an ever-growing power of modifying it for his own benefit. The supply of human food on the planet at any period is thus not a fixed quantity, but is capable of unlimited expansion through the agricultural and scientific knowledge and industry of the race. It is true that till recently one of the biggest problems of the race

was the production of food in sufficient quantities for the sustenance of an ever-growing population. In earlier times doubtless tribes and races were decimated and even eliminated through hunger and famine. Even to-day this may be true of special tribes. But civilised man is in a different position. What is wanted here is not the suppression of the rate of increase, but a better organisation of labour and a better distribution of commodities.* How to achieve this is the real problem of civilisation. And one of the most effectual motives for doing so is the ever-pressing needs of population which call forth the inventive and

* "The Malthusian formula is an ingenious falsification. It is false in its parts, and still more false as a whole. . . . What could be said a century ago and can be said now with much greater confidence is that the increase of the means of subsistence depends largely upon man's control over the natural resources and powers of the globe, and that, so long as his knowledge and skill in exploiting this natural bounty grow in proportion to his numerical increase, there is nothing to fear. It is only when, and in proportion as man becomes degraded, and loses intelligent power over himself and his environment, that that environment ceases to yield him the fruit necessary to support his increase." (G. L. Perris, *The Industrial Development of Modern England*, pp. 184–5.)

organising power of governments, and tax the enterprise and resourcefulness of individual men and women. Remove the immense stimulus derived from the force of the parental instinct in its endeavour to provide for the needs of growing children, and you remove from human life one of the most powerful incentives to realise the higher spiritual possibilities of the race. Gilbert Slater in dealing with this point tells us that a general practitioner, arguing that civilised humanity is entering on a phase of increasing sterility, summed up his belief thus—"First women cease to want to have children, then they cannot suckle them. In the third stage they will be unable to bear children." * This is probably a pessimistic conclusion; but it contains a modicum of truth which should act as a salutary warning.

* *Making of Modern England*, p. 294.

IX

It would be well to realise some of the salient facts that bear on the present situation. Restricting ourselves to such as affect our own national life, we find on the one side that since 1849 there has been a more or less continuous decrease in the death rate through the emergence of the science of public health, and possibly other more personal causes; it was then 25 per thousand, in 1911 it was 14·6, so that we have brought down the annual death rate to nearly half what it was then. The fall in the birth rate, on the other hand, dates from 1876, when it was the highest on record, being 36·7 per thousand; in 1911 it had come down to 24·4, being thus less by over one-third. Comparing these two lines of figures, we find that whereas in a much smaller population in 1846 the excess of births over deaths in the country was over 600,000 per annum, in 1911 it was less than 500,000, i.e. about one-sixth less in a much larger population. If this process goes on

unchecked we shall soon come to an actually diminishing population, for it is certain that the decrease in the death rate cannot go much further. France has already come to that pass ; our turn comes next ; Germany will follow ourselves, and America will soon be able to increase its population only through emigration. The situation throughout the civilised world will therefore soon come to a very serious pass unless a change for the better takes place.

But here we come upon a startling and significant fact. Comparative statistics show quite conclusively that the decrease in the birth rate in all European countries runs along religious and not merely national lines. It is the Protestant communities that are sinners above others in this respect ; the Catholic communities and the Jewish in every land are so far untainted with this poison. In the *Hibbert Journal* for October 1914, there is a very able but disturbing article on *Religious Belief as affecting the Growth of Population*, by Dr. Meyrick Booth, the argument being based on a wide and exhaus-

tive examination of the census returns in all countries. The result is the same everywhere; *the birth rate is decreasing only in Protestant as distinguished from Catholic communities.* The reader is referred to that article for details; but we will venture to summarise a few facts that concern us. There is a curious difference between Leeds and Bradford in the matter of birth rate—two towns so close together that they form almost one city, and the inhabitants of which are engaged in almost identical pursuits, and accustomed to live upon the same economic level; yet the birth rate in Leeds is 23·2 per thousand, and in Bradford 19·3 per thousand, i.e. 20% less in the latter than the former. The reason clearly seems to be that in Leeds the proportion of Jews and Irish Catholics is very high, while the Bradford working class is almost purely English, and overwhelmingly Protestant. The same difference appears in other towns where there is a varying proportion of Protestants and Catholics; in Lancashire, e.g., the birth rate is highest in Preston,

which is predominantly Catholic. Taking a large survey, it is found that at present, while the total birth rate in this country is 24·4 per thousand, the birth rate per thousand of the Roman Catholic population is 38·6. If this process goes on we come to the startling conclusion that by the end of this century Protestant Britain will become predominantly a Roman Catholic country, without a single convert being made from the one form of faith to the other!

There are many reflections suggested by these facts; one only we must mention. The reason for the state of things is simple. The Roman Catholic faith is clear and emphatic in its condemnation of any artificial interference with the laws of generation, and calls on its votaries to produce as many children for Holy Church as Nature healthily and normally permits them to have. This was true of Protestantism also till recently; but of late years the Protestant religious sentiment associated with this function has for some inscrutable reason died down.

It may be due to the fact that the rationalistic spirit has infected our churches more than it has the Catholic, and has caused the family instinct to pass under what we venture to hope is a temporary eclipse. Statistics show that rationalists and agnostics generally, so far as figures relating to them can be obtained, are far and away more deeply tainted with the tendency we are dealing with than any other class in society.

X

And now to come to the question suggested by the title of this chapter,—the special relation of the war to the population question.

Viewed in the light of what has been already said, this war takes a very serious aspect. Among its chief protagonists, excluding Catholic Austria, — and now Italy — are the three leading Protestant nations of Europe—if France where it is not Catholic is not mainly Agnostic. They must also be described as the three most

progressive nations in all that makes for learning, invention, science, discovery, and that much-abused word civilisation, in its modern sense. In this enumeration we are leaving Russia out since we do not know what attitude is taken towards the population question in that "Greek Church country"—(probably it would be more or less at present with that of Catholic countries). Now this war is working havoc with the male population of these progressive countries. The flower of our young men are being killed off in their hundreds of thousands, if not indeed in their millions. They are the prospective fathers of the next generation. They are the men of all others who should be the most prolific fathers; for they are the brave, the vital, the enterprising, the gifted portion of the race. If this war continues another year, then the white races of Europe will be bled white of their most desirable and promising elements. Meanwhile the women of corresponding age and quality remain. Many of them will be necessarily unmated for life, and will not have

a chance to become mothers at all. And if matters continue as they are, those who will be married are already infected with the dislike of prolific motherhood. According to present signs and symptoms we are thus face to face with a situation most serious and ominous for the future of our race. The British Empire is of vast extent, and if it is considered as a whole, very sparsely populated. Unless an entire revolution takes place in the attitude of our young and prospective mothers, we shall thus not be able to keep up our home population, much less send forth into our colonies a stream of strong and enterprising sons, there to continue and multiply our race in their new homes. Meanwhile we are face to face with another fact—that up to the present the lower races of mankind, and the yellow races of the East, are as prolific as ever, and are already pressing hard on the portals of our colonies, clamouring for more elbow room and a better place in the sun. Are the white races going to be submerged by the representatives of what we have always been accustomed to consider

the less developed types of humanity, and who are only slowly taking on the point of view, the culture, and the social ideals of Western nations? It must be so, inevitably so, if present tendencies continue. It is a prospect that cannot be faced with equanimity from our own point of view, whatever Eastern peoples may think of it. Nor is the outlook more promising on the American continent.

XI

It is thus clear that we are face to face with a racial problem of gigantic magnitude and of far-reaching significance. There are many other aspects of it which cannot be dealt with here. I must content myself with raising only one question—is there something that can be done to meet it?

1. In the first place it is time the matter were faced frankly and publicly in the interests of the nation at large. It has been hitherto considered on the one side as too delicate a subject for public treatment, and on the other as an individual and

personal question which must be left to private judgment. It is time to have done with false and what I venture to call prurient modesty. The question of procreation is a holy one. It deals with the fountains of life in the race. Nature has, it is true, hedged it around with all manner of passional sensibilities, easily roused to abnormal action; but this is largely because young people are left, at the very age when they cannot help thinking and enquiring about it, totally unguided by those who are older and experienced. Consequently they imbibe the false and artificial if not vicious views concerning it. It is time to have done with this dangerous and really indelicate attitude towards the central fact of life; and that a frank and sincere treatment of it should be at least attempted in the interests of unborn generations. The perils of silence are infinitely greater than those of speech.

2. Secondly, the chief missionary effort should be directed not to the men but to the women of the land, for there are abundant

indications that they are the chief sinners in the matter. Unmarried women may be purer than unmarried men; but if their purity means a growing tendency to refuse motherhood, then it is a false and not a true purity. And young married people must be taught the first principles of sex morality —that the sexual relation is not for the satisfaction of man and woman, (that aspect is biologically a secondary fact) but for the procreation of the future race; and that all artificial means of restricting the growth of population is a sin against life itself. They must be taught that the only legitimate check to motherhood is continence. If men and women do not wish to be fathers and mothers, then they have no right to mate at all; and they are living in an abnormal relationship and not a condition of healthy marriage if they tamper with Nature, forcing her to serve their selfish passions instead of serving her loyally as the guardians of unborn life. We are not dealing here with exceptional cases, which come under special laws and considerations,

but with normal life and its functions. There are many abnormalities in the married relation; fertility is largely a matter of mutual adaptation, health, nervous condition, temperamental peculiarities, and each case must be judged on its merits. But when all is normal, the result is healthy, vigorous, and fairly numerous progeny; and this normal result must be expected as the dutiful contribution of each family to the state and to the race. And it is to our women that the first appeal should be made. They have to bear the chief burden. Hitherto they have loyally faced their responsibilities. They must in some way be got to do so again, not as a matter of compulsion, but as a privilege and a duty. It is often affirmed, and largely taken for granted, that the perils and pains of maternity which have been so greatly increased by the habits of civilised women, are ineradicable under present conditions. On the other hand the highest medical authorities are clear in affirming the contrary. By returning to a simpler and more natural set of habits, it would be

possible for the normal woman to undergo this trial with comparative painlessness, and with almost entire immunity from danger.

3. Whether the state will have to come into action in settling this problem remains to be seen. There are conceivable circumstances in which this may be necessitated. We cannot afford to allow the race to deteriorate either in physique, health, or numbers. We want strong, capable, healthy, noble men and women for the tasks that await us after this war. And if state encouragement in the shape of bounties for large families, fines on persistent and self-indulgent bachelors, and other forms of stimulus to healthy parentage be desirable, then no doctrinaire objections must be allowed to interfere. At the present stage however more can be done by education and religious incentives than by state action, which should be kept in reserve as a last resort. We must return to the old Christian view of the married state—that it is for the procreation of children in the fear of

God, and for the good of the world, and not for the mere comfort, solace, and satisfaction of man and wife alone. Let the fundamental principle be enunciated far and wide, that it is not marriage but the baby that makes the normal family, and that the true remedy for large families is to be found not in the restriction of births, but a better distribution of the enormous and ever-increasing wealth that is being produced by the civilised nations. The human race was never healthier, more vital or more efficient for its earthly function than it is to-day. The world as yet is far from being adequately filled by the right type of man and woman. There is unlimited scope within the British Empire for the sufficient sustenance of a growing population. Instead therefore of inhibiting the natural rate of growth, the energies of mankind should be directed to the better organisation and distribution of the earth's resources, and of social opportunity. To make it possible for our citizens to be well-born, well-nurtured, well-educated, and well-started in life, should be the end of

all political policies, and of all social aims. To this end it should be our endeavour, especially during the next half century, to revive a healthy family sentiment, in order that out of the tragedy of this war a nobler race may be produced, which shall heal its ravages and make its tragic losses of less account.

CHAPTER V

THE CHALLENGE TO NATIONALISM— THE PROBLEM OF PATRIOTISM

In this war we see the apotheosis of patriotism. On all hands men are giving their utmost for home and country. The blood of millions has already been shed for their fatherland. Heroic deeds, heroic suffering, heroic self-sacrifice, have become the commonplaces of every day. On the ground, on the sea, beneath the sea, in the air, in trenches, dugouts, and subterranean passages, the chosen sons of Nine Nations are adventuring themselves fully, freely, in utter abandonment of self-devotion, to unknown perils and imminent death, for everything they hold humanly near and dear. At the word of command they pour forth in their multitudes, facing with unflinching courage all the diabolic weapons of destruction forged by modern science. Death takes Protean shapes in this

deadly struggle, and some are of so strange a novelty, and a horror so unimaginable, that the stoutest hearts might well quail at the thought of what may lie in wait for them. Yet there is no form of agony, misery, or torture which is not faced with the same stern resolve. What is it that fills these heroes with such contempt for what civilised man has come to dread so much in his peaceful moods—suffering and death—that even the Great Fear is paralysed by its absorbing passion, and the Last Enemy of mankind has lost his power to daunt and terrify ?

It is one of the strange ironies of the time that all the combatants, while filled with consuming rage against one another, are inspired by one common sentiment. The motive-power on all hands is the same—an overwhelming desire to defend their country and its interests ; an equally overwhelming fear that their enemies are bent on the destruction of these interests. A boundless Love, and a boundless Fear—these are the two impelling motives of this extraordinary sentiment of Patriotism which is being mani-

fested to-day with an intensity and on a scale seldom if ever paralleled in human history.

I

It is well to consider so tremendous a fact in the psychology of the race, and especially why it has burst into such a flame of devotion at this crisis.

The germ of the sentiment is to be found undoubtedly in the family instinct. As John Bright once put it, "the nation in every country dwells in the cottage." That is the source of the love of which patriotism is the largest expression. The primary impulse of men is to defend hearth and home, and this fundamental instinct underlies all the other social struggles of mankind. Men are willing to *work* in order to provide food and shelter for wife and children; and they are impelled to *fight* in order to defend them against hostile attack and outrage. It is no accident that so large a proportion of the volunteer army of Britain at this time are married men.

With this homing instinct are interwoven many other factors. It is reinforced by the attachment men feel for the land in which they were born, the social system in which they are brought up, the form of law and government which is the fruit of their past struggles and victories. The term nation stands for the aggregate of these relationships and social acquisitions. It is the final group into which mankind crystallises, and it sums up for its citizens all the solidarities, attachments and ideals which bind them into an organic and indissoluble whole. Nothing is more powerful than this social bond; nothing is more difficult to define than the nucleating principle which holds it together. Community of language, blood, types of government, religion—these are all factors of nationality, and yet you cannot identify the nation with any of these potent influences, nor with all of them. There are nations in which many languages are spoken; others are of mixed blood, of diverse governmental types, of varied religions; yet they are one in a common and passionate attach-

ment to their national ideals.* One feature, however, (*pace* Lord Morley's dictum) seems common to all true nations; they must have gone through a long history during which the elements of their communal life have been welded into one indissoluble unity by the consecrated memory of many sacrifices and struggles. Nations are usually born in the throes of some great heroic effort; they are often baptised in a fountain of blood and tears; their novitiate is passed in perpetual struggles for social consolidation, political liberty, and economic progress; their spiritual life expresses itself in their

* "Belgium is a political state, and yet its Walloon and Flemish provinces are not common in descent, tongue, or history. Austria-Hungary is a great state, though they speak twenty-four languages in the Austrian army. . . . Switzerland has three languages, yet is one nation; mostly common descent, common pride in their wresting of independence from Europe, common religious faith. Yet there are sixteen communities more or less entitled to the rank of nations, and the traveller tells us there is no sense of a common Spanish-American nationality. . . . Devotion to a dynasty has made nations. So has passion for a creed. So perhaps, most of all, that *ingenita erga patriam caritas*, the natural fondness for the land where we were born." (John Morley, *Politics and History*, pp. 77–9.)

literature, art, religious beliefs, ritual and worship. It would appear that nations, like men, have their youth, their period of vigour, their old age. In the successive eras of human history we see many such nations forming, rising into power and efficiency, maintaining themselves for centuries against disruptive forces within and antagonisms without, and then passing into feebleness and decay on the way to scattering and dissolution. Some of the greatest nations in size and power, which have for a time ground weaker peoples pitilessly beneath their heel, have failed to maintain themselves for long against the decadent tendencies concealed beneath the fair surface of their life, and have passed slowly away, leaving the memorials of their glory buried beneath desert sands; while some of the least among their subject races have displayed a miraculous gift of persistence and recuperation. History presents us with a dissolving picture of the rise and fall of tribes and empires which emerge, continue for a while, and cease to be, according to laws which baffle

the wisest philosophers, and fill the mind of the historian with wonder and perplexity. New groupings and admixtures of races keep constantly forming and dissolving as the centuries pass; some are barren and soon break up; others are fruitful and amalgamate into happy combinations, developing and persisting for long ages. But as yet no single race, however pure, no combination of races, however happy, has been fated to persist for ever. Nations like men seem born only to die at last. That nation is destined to persist the longest, and fulfils the most potent function in the perpetual flux and reflux of human history, which is able to develop the deepest sense of its individuality, and which fills its citizens with the most ardent and intelligent patriotism.

II

The expression of this communal individuality, which is the core of a nation, is in that aggregate of institutions we call the *State*, the essence of which lies in a centralised

government, a common policy, and an organised social life.

The State is thus the nation acting through its legislative, administrative and political machineries for common and distinctive ends. In its internal aspects the State is the guardian of the people's rights, the framer of its laws, the executant of its sense of justice, the collective instrument of its instinct for order and progress. In its external aspects it organises its defensive and aggressive forces in its relations with other peoples. In the first capacity the State represents the communal will in relation to justice; in the latter the same will in relation to independence or supremacy. Its civil institutions safeguard and develop the internal interests of its citizens in their relations with one another; its military institutions safeguard and develop those interests in view of possible attack from outside. The one, roughly speaking, expresses the will to Right; the other, the will to Power. The ideal State endues right with power, and exercises its power righteously.

With the internal aspect of the State we have for the moment nothing to do; our present problem is to analyse the function of the State as the organised expression of the will to Power. Here we come face to face with one of the most extraordinary facts in the social psychology of mankind. While the interchanges of benefit within the social organism (mutual service and defence, friendship, comradeship) create a warm love for kith and kindred and fellow-countrymen, the various aggregates thus formed have from prehistoric times been, too often, mutually repellent. History indeed, as commonly conceived, is chiefly concerned with the tensions and struggles caused by this unfortunate trait in humanity. This lack of cohesion between the social masses of mankind is partly instinctive, and partly reasoned. Language bears witness to the natural suspicion and dread with which those belonging to rival tribes and races regarded each other in primitive ages.* The instinctive basis of

* In Welsh the "other" man (Hwntw, i.e. the man who lives "beyond" the mountains) means the alien

this sentiment is difficult to fathom; the rational ground is unquestionably a sense of conflicting interests, arising primarily from an insufficient food supply, and later from jealousy of each other's possessions and prosperity. It is by infinitely slow degrees that this prehistoric antagonism between races and peoples has been modified, chiefly through the influence of the interchanges of commerce, travel, political alliances, a common literature and religion. In the event, these inter-racial shocks and struggles for place and power have given the sentiment of patriotism its darker aspects. If the core of this feeling is a great love for home and fatherland, there is interwoven with it a vague fear and often a consuming hatred of other peoples. The patriotic passion never flames up so intensely as when it is face to face with aggression, or is inspired by a lust for expansion at the cost of other tribes or nations. Then the soul of a nation

suspect, if not the natural foe; even in Latin, *hostis* means both "stranger" and "enemy." Compare also the Latin proverb "Homo homini ignoto lupus est" ("ignoto" here standing for foreigner).

wakes into power; internal jealousies, conflicting interests, party divisions, class antagonisms vanish and die into silence; rich and poor, cultured and ignorant, high-born and proletariat waken into a sense of their common interests; and the tocsin sounds for war and slaughter.

III

The question thus emerges, whether patriotism is on the whole a bane or a blessing to the human race. And more particularly, is it compatible with a Christian temper and attitude?

We are met at the outset with the fact that both nationality and its psychic and moral correlative patriotism have always been organic elements in human life, and there is no sign that they are passing away; on the contrary, the last century has seen a marked accentuation of both. It is thus as idle to ask whether they are right or wrong in themselves as it would be to ask whether parentage and the family instinct are desir-

able as facts of life. They are inalienable attributes of life itself; they belong to the warp and woof of our nature; we could not continue as a race without them. It is probable that the family instinct is not bedded more securely into the depths of our being than that social instinct which consolidates communities into separate nationalities. It emerges from the mysterious but potent subconscious background of our psychic life, which has been but recently recognised by science, but which exercises so profound an influence on our conscious life.

It is therefore best to change the form of our question and ask, what are the true functions of nationality and of patriotism, and how may they be Christianised?

First as to *nationality*. It presents two aspects, the one co-ordinating, the other divisive. Men would not combine into tribes, communities and nations were they not impelled to do so by a sense of social advantage, if not of vital necessity. And it must be recognised that under favourable conditions

this fact lies at the root of the finest social developments of the race. It is difficult to single out the conditions that make a nation great—so varied are they, and so adaptive is the principle of social as of organic life. And the manifestations of national greatness are as varied as the qualities and ideals of the races that embody them. We cannot say that purity of race, or extent of territory, or geographical position, or any other distinguishing circumstance, is enough in itself to make a nation great. The essential condition seems to be the emergence of a sense of communal personality, which expresses itself in a distinctive function of permanent significance not only for the people itself but for the race as a whole. No nation liveth unto itself, and none dieth unto itself. And it is a curious fact that this function may not be consciously in line with the avowed aims of the nation that exercises it. The artistic instinct of the Greeks manifested itself in their literature and their plastic art as spontaneously as the song of a nightingale; they had no notion that they were building

for themselves an undying name, or laying humanity under an endless debt of gratitude. The splendid legal system of the Romans was built up through many centuries as the exigencies of internal conflict and administrative experience called it forth; it was not till Justinian codified the results that subsequent ages discovered how thoroughly that wonderful nation had formulated for all time the essential principles of civil and colonial government. Just as little did the tiny Hebrew nation, whose fate it was to be poured like wine from one vessel to another in successive captivities, realise that in their matchless religious literature they were writing the Bible of the race, and preparing the way for the consummation of the Incarnation and the Cross. These benefits were none the less real or permanent because they were thus unconsciously rendered;—perhaps greatness, personal or collective, is always more or less unknowing of itself. As regards its constructive principle, it is thus clear that nationality is thoroughly compatible with the root principle of Christianity, and

that it is capable of fulfilling a beneficent function, both in the interests of its own citizens, and of the race at large.

The real problem of nationality in its religious aspect arises when we consider its divisive aspect. What binds men into separate groups and communities tends to create antagonism between the groups. The peril and the temptation of nations is to live exclusively for themselves as a whole, and to view other nations as their natural rivals, and even enemies, whose power of mischief must be destroyed by active warfare, or held in check by a system of threatening armaments—a condition of things euphemised in the phrase "an armed peace."

It is this development of nationality which has given rise to the present war. After the collapse of the Napoleonic effort to make France the dictator of Europe, a long interval intervened during which the nations were employed in the process of recovery from the exhaustion of twenty years of warfare. The spirit of aggression gradually gave way to a better international

feeling, and it was thought that an era of abiding peace was about to set in. The application of steam to methods of travelling on sea and land opened up new vistas of commercial development; travel became world-wide; a vast republic of letters was established; the solidarity of the civilised world grew apace; a cosmopolitan temper was generated in place of the mean rivalries and petty quarrels of the leading peoples. In spite of a few lapses into militancy, the most notable of which was the Crimean War, this happier mood continued till late in the 'sixties. Then came the Prusso-Danish and Prusso-Austrian struggles, and a new menace to the peace of Europe appeared. The result of the Franco-Prussian War—the unification of Germany under the hegemony of the house of Hohenzollern—led to the recrudescence of the warlike spirit in an accentuated form. Irritated by the restless and crooked diplomacy of Bismarck, the European nations again began to distrust and fear each other. The era of exaggerated armaments set in, especially after the accession

of the present Emperor of Germany; and Europe began to groan under the ever-increasing burden of militancy. Thus nationality once more became an actively divisive influence, and patriotism an aggressive passion on the one side faced by a nervous and irritable apprehensiveness on the other, issuing at last in this colossal and sanguinary struggle.

IV

And here again we meet the challenge of Christianity to a world at war.

That love of home and country is entirely compatible with that wider attitude of good-will towards all mankind which religion fosters, is clear enough; but the patriotism which feeds on distrust and suspicion, envy and malice; which aims through its diplomacy at sowing seeds of discord among neighbouring peoples, with a view to profiting by their rivalries and disagreements; which, in a word, identifies progress with aggression, and self-interest with the humilia-

tion and discomfiture of other nations, is as clearly incompatible with a Christian world-view. And such a form of patriotism, since it is a perpetual menace to the peace of the world, can only be met with unflinching opposition, even at the cost of war. The Christianising of patriotism as a human sentiment involves the defeat of all those nations who profess and practise this false form of it, since it makes truly friendly relations with other peoples impossible. And it would seem that no power less potent and appealing than the triumph of a religion of humanity, which makes all national interests subservient to those of mankind as a whole, can work this miracle. Christianity is such a religion. It is therefore a Christian policy to undertake any sacrifices necessary to uproot the danger presented to the future progress and peace of Europe by such a temper as has been sedulously cultivated in Germany during the last half century. It would be idle to deny that this temper has to some extent inoculated the policies of other nations than Germany; indeed,

all have been more or less guilty, for such a spirit is strangely infectious. It is, however, now clear that the real source of the mischief, and the chief barrier to its elimination, is the German Government; and till that Government is humiliated in the dust, it is idle to hope for a return to a better state of feeling on the Continent.

It is therefore in the interests of the true ideal of Christian patriotism that this war is being waged by the Allies. It is not too much to say that the world is looking anxiously to the issues of the struggle. The future of the whole race depends on it. If Germany wins, the civilised peoples will be thrown into a state of perpetual ferment and disturbance which it will take generations of struggle and warfare to eliminate, during which all the painful gains of centuries of industrial and social development will be spilt like water on the ground, and civilisation will have to rebuild itself from its foundations. If Germany fails, and the Allies are finally triumphant, the very fact that they are fighting for the principle of moralised inter-

national relationships as opposed to a policy which openly repudiates the notion that the laws of morality have any place in the counsels of nations, will be so far a guarantee for the preservation of these moralised relationships in future. In order to ensure this result, the war must be fought to a finish. A drawn struggle would only perpetuate a condition of things that has already become unbearable. There is no sacrifice therefore on the part of the Allies which they should not be willing to make in order finally to break the power of the common enemy, and make it impossible for the same danger to threaten the world again.

Thus far there is no sign of flagging or disunion among those who are carrying on this heroic struggle; indeed, the solidarity of the Allies, who are bound together by no written treaty, but who are animated by a profound sense of a common danger, is one of the most marvellous phenomena of history. Some millions of men in the prime of life have already, it is calculated, laid down their lives in this fratricidal war;

as many more appear willing to do so. The world has never witnessed a devotion so widespread and colossal as this. It is now for the rank and file of the nations to maintain the same patient and unconquerable spirit as their soldiers at the front; for that side will ultimately win which possesses the greatest reserve of national endurance. And the more terrible the losses of life and treasure already incurred, or yet to be called for, the more imperative is the need for an indomitable and quenchless ardour in the effort that yet remains. Every life lost, every building destroyed, every moment of anguish and sorrow undergone by those who have given their dearest and best to this holy cause is an added incentive to that perseverance and patience which can alone win the victory. When that victory comes, it ought to herald a new era of security for peace and progress, and future ages will look back with the same gratitude that we now feel towards those who broke the power of Napoleon a century ago, and saved Europe from the tyranny of an un-

principled adventurer, and from the attempted rape of a continent's liberties.

V

Finally, what form will the patriotism of the future take? There are those who believe that its function is nearly over, and this for two reasons. In the first place the relations of mankind, now that they have become world-wide, must tend to dissipate the particular love of country which has hitherto been one of the *momenta* of social life. The world's populations, at least within each colour line, will gradually intermingle and form one composite race, into which each strain will pour its vitality, and contribute its special qualities; the various tongues of the world which are among the chief barriers to the free intermixture of blood will give place to one or two dominant languages, which will drive all others out of use. We see this process at work to-day on the American Continent, and in our colonies, where immigrants from

every land are gradually absorbed into the existing populations, and in a couple of generations are firmly welded into the general population, often becoming more American than the indigenous Americans themselves. A similar process must in course of time take place in Europe also; so that ultimately there will be a European nation. If only the colour line could be effectively crossed, a further coalescence of races would take place, and mankind become literally one race, differing probably in certain particulars according to habitat, but essentially the same as Englishmen are identical throughout the Empire to-day in spite of local peculiarities of dialect and custom.

This forecast ignores essential facts. We have already referred to the stubborn hold which the instinct for segregation into racial and national groups has on the human race. It is not very much to the point to draw an inference from the attitude of immigrants to the land of their adoption, for they are there voluntarily, and the very

fact that their children usually become so patriotic to the country where they are brought up proves how invariably the instinct reappears in each generation. The argument also contains a violent *petitio principii*, since it takes for granted that nationalism is an undesirable fact. That it often leads to unhappy divisions and antipathies, and is the chief cause of wars has been already freely conceded. We would, however, re-emphasise the benefits which it brings, not only by providing citizens with the strongest motives to altruistic service, but because it encourages the fulfilment of the specific functions which each nation fills, through literature, art, varied forms of government, etc., in the collective life of mankind. The call of Patriotism awakens genius into activity, develops a variety of high qualities in ordinary men and women, and furnishes channels for distinctive ability of every kind. The lesser nations, because of the individuality and intensity of their life, have rendered conspicuous service to later ages, and seem capable of quickening the

best possibilities of their citizens as many of the more numerous peoples have failed to do.

The alternative to patriotism is the sentiment of internationalism. In a sense such a feeling is more altruistic than the other, but it is correspondingly vaguer and more diffused, and lacks impulse to any fruitful activity. No great work has ever been inspired from this source, whether artistic or practical. Human nature is built on other and narrower lines, and needs the stimulus of more specific objects of regard than humanity as a whole, in order to be stirred into greatness of any kind.

But, secondly, is it not true that the Christian faith is essentially international in its scope? Does it not sweep beyond every boundary of land and race, and embrace all mankind within the scope of its love and regard? Was it not the pride and joy of the apostles that in Christ is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free? When He is lord of all, and His Kingdom has come with power, will not each man regard

every other man as his brother, and all separating lines and limitations fall away and disappear in a splendid vision of the unity of all in Him? And will not this involve the extinction of special and local ties between man and his fellows?

As well may we expect that the still more intense family instinct should die down and disappear in the glory of His appearing. That is not the way in which the world-problem is likely to be solved. The influence of the Christian faith, once it is universal, will unquestionably do away with the antipathies and divisive elements in patriotism; but the binding and cohesive elements in it will be intensified and purified, and made more real. Just as the love of home is compatible with the love of country, so is patriotism compatible with the wider regard which embraces the world within its scope. Because we love wife and children we need not love our country less; the intenser the former is, the more does it feed and beautify the latter. So Christian patriotism is no barrier to a generous consideration

for, and an altruistic interest in, the race as a whole. This fact has been gloriously manifested in the great and still unspent missionary movement of the last century. This has gone forth to all the world in a passion of yearning for the salvation of every human soul; but it has in no way interfered with the love of home and land in those who have been its exponents and supporters. True Christians have ever been the best patriots.

We do not therefore look forward to the atrophying of the sentiment of patriotism in the future, but rather to its regeneration. The false patriotism which glorifies one's own nation and land at the expense of others will ultimately die out with the wolf-spirit which in the past has too often masqueraded in sheep's clothing; but this will be to give place to the true patriotism in which love for home and fatherland is but an intenser form of a principle of good-will which embraces mankind, and whose willingness to venture all in defence of liberty and right outrages no law, lowers no ideal, endangers

no human interest; but which works in harmony with all that would lift the race into possession of the freedom, progress, enlightenment and security enjoyed by the land that gave us birth.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHALLENGE TO MILITARISM— THE PROBLEM OF WAR

THE position taken up throughout this volume is that the present war has been forced on Britain and her Allies, and that whatever be our considered judgment on war as a means of settling international disputes, there was no option left us, when all the resources of diplomacy had failed, and in view of the incalculable issues at stake, but to accept the gage of battle. The extraordinary unanimity of the nation as a whole in accepting the risks and tragedy of this terrific struggle in an empire which is essentially peace-loving, was the fruit of a profound conviction that there was no other alternative possible to a self-respecting people. That this conviction has permeated the religious section of the people as thoroughly as the rest is proved by the

willing contribution made to the new army by families belonging to all the churches, established and free. Previous wars have never commanded the assent of rich and poor, cultured and ignorant, religious and irreligious as this has done. Every class, creed, profession and calling has given its best and dearest to the defence of King and Country. Never since the Puritan Revolution has a voluntary army included so many peaceful citizens in its ranks. Men who, twelve months ago, would have repudiated the idea of taking up the profession of arms with horror and loathing, have eagerly shouldered their muskets and faced the perils of the most terrible conflict of history with high courage and whole-hearted devotion. Nothing short of a sense of religious duty can explain so far-spreading and unparalleled a revolution of attitude. Such men do not thus freely adventure their lives except under the stress of an irresistible motive. Let us consider the full significance of the situation. During a long period of peace and prosperity the

war spirit was slowly dying out among us; we were gradually becoming a nation of pacifists. The total failure of the party of conscription, which had been trying to galvanise a dying and discredited cause under various pretexts, showed that our national ideals were stubbornly inimical to such a policy. Our minds were set on other things. We turned aside with impatience and scorn from the most impassioned appeals of statesman and warrior, who warned us in vain against the German peril, and failed to rouse us into sympathy with the supposed benefits of military training whether forced or free. We did not believe that there was any danger of attack at home, any possible call to service abroad, and we went about our ordinary avocations with serene and untrammelled minds. A rude awakening awaited us when the thunderbolt of war shook the Continent last August, and the marvel is that this awakening was as complete as it was sudden. After a brief pause of uncertainty the nation rose as one man in view of the precipice of

disaster that yawned before us, and the issue is as we find it to-day—with three million men under arms, and the nation organised as never before for a death-struggle against an implacable and resourceful foe.

And herein lies a grave and subtle danger. This war spirit is one of the most stubborn and unmanageable impulses in the human heart. It appeals to elemental instincts; the primeval savage, however deeply buried beneath the surface of life, lies implicit in the best of us; and once the restraints of habit and the higher principles of conduct are remitted, the natural man is apt to reassert his lawless passions without measure, and once roused is difficult to bring under subjection. The longer this war lasts, the harder will be the process of recovery.

Behind this lies a still greater peril—that our national attitude towards war itself should be reversed, and we should become a nation of militarists. It may be indeed that when the issue of this struggle is decided, the combatants will be so sickened of its horrors that a great pacifist impulse

will sweep over not only this country but over the whole of Europe. This, however, is by no means certain. It is just as likely that the brutal manner in which the war has been carried on by Germany will leave behind a legacy of bitterness and hatred which a generation of peaceful relations will not efface. Meanwhile the exponents of militarism will endeavour to take advantage of the irritant tempers of the nations and fasten their yoke still more tightly on their shoulders. It will therefore be well to remember that we have in our midst a party bent on glorifying war as an ineffaceable factor in human life, who hold that it has abiding functions to fulfil in the evolution of society in the future, as it certainly has had in the past history of the race.

We owe the militarist spirit which led to the burdensome armaments of European countries during the past half century ultimately to Frederick the Great (so-called), who was the first to enforce universal conscription on his people, and to train them

definitely into the belief that the first duty of every citizen is to be a soldier, whatever else he may be. But more immediately it is Bismarck who is responsible for this state of things, whose personality impressed itself so profoundly on the corporate life of European peoples. Under his influence, Europe gradually became an armed camp. He was not a thinker but a man of action, and it is out of the situation created by his work in the creation of a united Germany that the new science of war arose. Briefly we may say that we owe to Nietzsche the German view of the philosophy of war, that its policy was laid down and defined by the historian Treitschke, and that its programme was worked out by the military theorists whose chief spokesmen are Von der Goltz and Bernhardi. The works and influence of these men, however, spread far beyond the confines of Germany. Their spirit has proved markedly contagious, and has infected many leaders of thought in every civilised nation; so much so indeed that the profound difference of temper

between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is mainly due to the emergence and dominance of this type of thinking. In France Renan, " one of the most sensitive and expressive of all modern writers," poured polite sarcasm on the peace-sentiment; in America General Homer Lea, Admiral Mahan, Ex-President Roosevelt, and others have strenuously defended the military spirit as a principle of progress and national healthfulness; in this country we have seen the rise of a war-party which has gained ground year by year, whose sentiments have been expressed by such high-minded thinkers as Charles Kingsley, Canon Newbolt, Archdeacon Farrar, the Archbishop of Armagh, by a host of military writers in the reviews; while in the newspaper world we have had the increasingly bold advocacy of the same spirit in the " yellow press " and the *Spectator*. It is true that the peace-party has in the meantime not been idle. There has been an active international propaganda for the advocacy of peace-principles among the churches, which held its last international

congress in Germany during the very days when the various ultimatums were being exchanged round Europe—a proof that as compared with the war-party this movement (so strong during Victorian times) has become of little account. We are thus faced with a new development in human thought on this subject, and it is of the utmost importance that we should realise its significance, and how far it can be justified.

I

Let us begin with what is called the *biological* argument for war.

Nature, according to this position, is the arena of an internecine struggle; there is, indeed, an unending and merciless war among living creatures. First, there is the struggle between all forms of life and its environment. Far more creatures are born in every species than can possibly survive; these are constantly being weeded out by heat, cold, famine, disease, changes of climate, and recurrent scarcity of food.

Then there is the struggle of species with species, especially that between the herbivorous and the carnivorous creatures—between the prey-ers and the preyed-upon. Finally, there is the struggle between individuals of the same species who have to compete with one another for place, and food, and sexual opportunity, and mastery of the herd or flock. This struggle for survival appears on the surface to be pitiless and cruel in the extreme. On a deeper view, however, it is found to work out beneficently. It lies at the very root of the evolutionary process, inasmuch as it tends to the elimination of the weaker and less efficient creatures in early youth, so that the various races are propagated by the strong, the healthy, the vigorous members of their kind. But for this searching and all-pervading principle of war in Nature there would have been no upward march of life from ascidian to man, no differentiating lines of development among vegetables, insects, fish, mammalia, and men. As it is the wonderful efficiency of each species

for its life-purposes has been attained, the "balance" of life has been worked out, and the world is full of every conceivable form of living creature, the members of which are, on the whole, healthy, happy and full of enjoyment of their life-functions. There is not a limb or organ or function of animal life that has not been affected by the beneficent pressure of this "warfare." The down on a butterfly's wing, the shape of a coriander-seed, the tail feathers of a bird, the swiftness of the gazelle, the hardihood of the camel, the hunting instincts of the lion and panther, the timidity of the hare, the watchfulness and speed of the deer, the cunning of the fox, the mingled courage and nervousness of the wild-horse of the prairie, have all been developed in this way. Further—and this is very important to remember in this connection—the qualities that have been developed by the action of this law are also maintained by it. There is another biological law in virtue of which there is a tendency to what is called "reversion to type"—to fall back

first to the average, and then to a degenerate form. This tendency is held in check by the war-principle; for as soon as reversion begins in any species, it tends to be eliminated by the necessities of the struggle for life. Thus, the level of life-efficiency tends on the whole to be more than maintained, and life fulfils its law of progress without let or degeneracy, except here and there through the principle of parasitism, by which lower and less efficient creatures thrive at the expense of the higher.

Now the contention is that mankind, as the highest of all earthly races, has been evolved under the stress of the forces that have produced this struggle for life; and that war is the last and most searching form of the struggle. *Ex hypothesi* it is thus claimed that this is one of the factors which as it has produced human efficiency is just as necessary for its maintenance and perfection. Let war and all the qualities of biological efficiency which it engenders be for ever abolished from the earth, and the human race will rapidly degenerate;

a lower type of nation (especially the trading type!) will be evolved, and the higher type, strong, valiant, resourceful, enterprising, and noble, will gradually disappear from the earth. Such, in brief, is the biological argument for war.

How are these arguments to be met? Not surely by saying that there is nothing in them, as some peace advocates affirm. Unquestionably in earlier stages of society war did tend to the elimination of weaker types of individuals and nations, and to the dominance of higher types. There are, however, two fallacies in the modern argument which may be briefly pointed out. It ignores, in the first place, the fact that physical struggle and competition is only one phase of the life-process, and that it is a phase which belonged to the earlier stages of evolution. Human evolution has depended increasingly on another factor in life—the co-operative principle. This principle indeed lies rooted deep even in animal life, as Prince Kropotkin has shown in his very suggestive book on *Mutual Aid*

in Nature; but it is man's *differentia* as man that he has developed this factor of evolution to an extent which more than any other accounts for his sovereignty over Nature and the animal world. By giving the benefit of his individual qualities and aptitudes to the service of his fellows, and by sharing the benefits of those belonging to others, human society has been slowly evolved; each generation has contributed its share to the ever-accumulating store of common good; and progress has become possible at an ever-increasing rate. Secondly, the argument ignores the fact that man's real struggle for existence and for well-being is not essentially with his fellow-men, but with Nature, except in the very earliest stages of his history. The more the co-operative spirit has prevailed, the more far-reaching and thorough has been his mastery of Nature, and his capacity to turn her boundless treasuries to his own use. Thus war in civilised times has always checked and thrown back the stream of human progress, and, by dividing nation

against nation, has interrupted their intercourse, sapped their energies, exhausted their accumulated stores of treasure, and hindered their possibilities of mutual helpfulness. The biological argument for war has therefore been finally discredited through the rise of a world-civilisation, the benefits of which can only be garnered and used in times of peace. What distinguishes man from other earthly creatures is the sovereignty of the mind in him, and this sovereignty can be gained and maintained only as the unity and the co-operation of the whole race is realised and unfolded into its amazing and endless possibilities of good. In a word, war destroys the fruits of civilisation by disuniting men and nations, which means that biologically it is not a principle of progress but a cause of atavism and reversion to type.

II

Let us pass on to the *physiological argument for war.*

This is based on the contention that

war, like all forms of life struggle, tends to race-improvement in the type of individual who survives the contest. This argument holds valid for those periods in human history when war was waged by simple weapons, and when single combat was the deciding factor. When every man was perforce a soldier, and carried his weapons of offence and defence with him everywhere, and when battles were fought by small groups of men hand to hand, and knee to knee, it is clear that the stronger and abler and more courageous individuals survived the struggle, and that the weaker specimens of each tribe were eliminated from amongst the prospective fathers of their race. There is one nation which stands at the head for race-efficiency, which probably owes its superb health and origin to this factor of human evolution—the Scotch, whose clan-feuds were fierce and bloody in the extreme, which continued down to quite recent times.

The validity of the physiological argument for war, however, has been altogether reversed

since the invention of high-power explosives and long-range fighting. In modern battles, the only method of close-range fighting takes the form of cavalry and bayonet charges; here personal prowess is still a deciding factor. These, however, are only a phase of present-day warfare. In modern battles where shells and rifle bullets are the deciding factors, the strong man has no advantage over his weaker brother; his very stature and size afford a better target for the enemy, so that he is at a positive disadvantage because of his virility. "What," writes a recent author, "is the real process of war? You carefully select from the general population the healthiest, the sturdiest, the physically and mentally soundest, those possessing the virile and manly qualities which you most desire to preserve, and, having thus selected the élite of two populations, you put them to exterminate each other by battle and disease, and leave the worst of both sides to amalgamate in the process of conquest and defeat,—because, in so far as the final amalgamation

is concerned, both processes have the same result,—and from this amalgam you create the new nation or the new society to continue the race." * A German historian claims that the downfall of Ancient Rome was due solely to this rooting out of the best citizens. Seely tells us that the Roman Empire perished for want of men. A historian of Greece, discussing the Peloponnesian wars, says, "Only cowards remain, and from their broods come new generations." In the Napoleonic wars three million of men—the élite of Europe—perished, and one result was that the average height of Frenchmen fell abruptly by one inch; and it is certain that the physical fitness of the French nation was greatly weakened by the drain of these wars, so that the authorities have been compelled every few years to reduce the standard of physical fitness in order to maintain the military strength of the nation, "so that even three-foot dwarfs are impressed." †

* Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion*, pp. 235–6.

† *Ibid.* p. 236, note.

On the other hand, the peaceful nations, at the head of which stand the English and American, have, during this period, shown a vigour both physical and mental, which have given them the political and economic sovereignty of the world, while the most warlike nations of past centuries —the Spanish, Portuguese, and in a measure the French—have failed to avail themselves of the opportunities for colonial expansion which was once theirs. In the modern world it is the civilian and not the warlike qualities that have proved themselves efficient for even political expansion—as witness the colonial enlargement of the British and other mercantile and industrial peoples.

There is another aspect of the physiological question which I must mention in a word or two. The well-being of a race depends on a generous birth rate, which gives a better opportunity for the survival of the fitter specimens of humanity, which, we are told, generally begin to appear after the second or third birth. But militarism undoubtedly works against a large birth

rate, since it demands marital celibacy during the years of training which are the years of superabundant vigour.

Thus the physiological argument for war is seen (like the biological) to fail as civilisation advances.

III

Next, let us consider briefly the *economic* argument for war.

In ancient times tribes and nations enriched themselves by annexing the property and land of the people they conquered, and grew comparatively rich in the process. I say *comparatively* rich. Even here, however, there was a decrease of absolute wealth, since the wealth-producing power and opportunities of the conquered tribes were diminished. War has always cost more effort than has direct production. And this has always entailed untold suffering to the conquerors as well as the conquered, who have often been eliminated. Modern wars have always resulted in an enormous destruction of wealth, accumulated slowly

and painfully through years of industry and thrift. The fact that the German nation has become rich and made extraordinary progress since and directly because of the Franco-Prussian war stands a solitary exception to the rule, and has created a false impression that some wars at least lead to wealth and prosperity. The real reason of Germany's recent prosperity, however, has been political and economic. The war of 1870 led to the fusion of the German states under one empire by eliminating their mutual jealousies under the stress of a common danger, thus giving opportunity for industrial organisation and commercial development. This result would have been equally or better achieved by peaceful amalgamation,—and it was the war-spirit alone which had prevented this fusion at a much earlier period.

As a matter of fact, militarism is the sworn enemy of economic progress. In the first place it keeps a very important section of the nation that falls into its grip idle during the time of training, three or more years of the

best working period of a man's life being spent unproductively, during which period he has to be maintained by the community. The cost of war during times of peace is enormous, and it is constantly increasing. Ten years ago the maintenance of European armies during peace time was £212,000,000 a year, and since then this cost has greatly increased. When war is actually being waged this cost is multiplied almost beyond compute. It has been calculated that during the historic period war has cost humanity the almost unimaginable sum of £160,000,000,000, which means that during times of warfare men have spent that sum in killing one another.* "Supposing the same effort had been expended in cultivating the soil, irrigating the fields, weaving cloth, building houses, levelling roads, channelling harbours, and so on, is it not perfectly clear that the world's face would have been different to-day?" If, instead of war, peace had reigned throughout the historic period, wealth beyond the dreams of avarice would have been in the

* Novikow's *War and its Alleged Benefits*, p. 37.

possession of humanity, and if this were fairly distributed, poverty would long since have passed away.

But that is not all. The worst economic result of militarism is seen not in the burdens it imposes on the living, but on the unborn. When Pitt, a little over a hundred years ago, affirmed for the first time in history that a nation need not pay for its wars "on the nail" as it were, but could contract a debt to be paid by future generations, he discovered a dangerous method of escaping the immediate consequences of war. Since then nations have accumulated immense and ever-increasing war debts, which are really drafts on posterity, whom we are involving in a system of economic slavery which is more iniquitous in principle than any of ancient times, and to which there is scarcely a limit. This method of raising bills on the future is a fruitful cause as well as a result of militarism. And if it is wrong for a man to mortgage his own future, how much greater is the crime by which he mortgages the future of his children and his children's

children, down to the third and fourth generation ?

IV

The *political argument* for war is of a different kind, and it is more plausible than any we have so far reviewed.

Treitschke is the chief and strongest exponent of this line of thought. He points out the fact that the world is divided into nations or states which are the final and sociological units of human society. The state, he says, adopting the principle first expounded by Machiavelli in his book *The Prince*, is fundamentally based on force or compulsion ; it is indeed force incarnate. Its last word is " Thou must ! " to each of its citizens. The Government is the expression of this principle of force, and the army is its final executant. This is so as regards its own citizens ; and it is so as regards the other aggregates of humanity which are called nations. There is no law or power or right in the world higher than that of the state ; no court of appeal from

its decisions, no standard of conduct other than the code it lays down for itself. And as it is incarnate force by nature, it is by force alone that it can in the last resort win and maintain its place in the hierarchy of nations. Therefore if a people would be strong; if it would develop in comparison with other nations; if it would win advantages, political, economic, international; above all if it is ambitious of expansion in the interests of its citizens, it must be a military power, and it will be strong and dominant in exact proportion to its war efficiency. Militarism is therefore the prime condition of national well-being. It is the *sine qua non* of progress.

This line of argument is built on a vast assumption. Let us ask a more fundamental question—on what ground can it be said that the final unit of mankind is the nation? On no ground whatever other than the assumption that things as they are are permanent and unchangeable, which in a world of perpetual change in international as in other affairs is an absurdity. As a matter

of fact this assumption is already belated and untrue. By the development of industrial, commercial, economical, scientific, and religious international relationships the principle of nationality is being profoundly modified. These relationships of mankind indeed have long since overleaped the barriers of nationalism; already we have international commerce, science, philosophy, intercourse, travel, and inter-marriage. Bradford trades with Hongkong and Valparaiso; British theologians read the works of German philosophers as part of their daily work; each nation benefits by the inventions, discoveries, manufactures of all other nations. Corresponding to this international intercourse which the means of travel have rapidly built up, a new science has begun to emerge, at present tentative and uncertain, but already a true science—the science of *international law.* The various Governments of the world, i.e., have long since begun to formulate their relationships into something like a code of conduct. The Hague Convention, weak and tentative as its regu-

lations have hitherto been, has even dared to lay down certain plain regulations as to the conduct of war itself, and to these the various civilised nations have put their sign and seal. Those who in the face of this affirm the ultimate character of the state are flying not only in the face of facts but of their own solemn undertakings. The people therefore that breaks away from the comity of nations is a reversion to type, it is a throw-back to the times of lawlessness and international immorality; it is a bandit nation—nothing less, and should be treated as such, as the German nation which has brought this evil war to pass must be treated when the day of reckoning comes. There is a higher unit than the single state, as pointed out in a previous chapter; there are first the aggregations of civilised states; and above all there is humanity itself—the only final and ultimate human unit on the globe. The time must come when this fundamental unity of the race will express itself in some institutional form, which shall be authoritative for every race and com-

munity of human beings, and to which each nation will be as responsible for its good conduct and respect for law as are the cities and minor communities to the state to which they severally belong. It may be a long time ere this shadowy and nebulous code of international ethics is authoritatively formulated and enforced by a grand police-army of the nations; but as surely as the relationships of mankind are becoming world-wide, so surely must this ultimately come to pass. The first condition towards this consummation is the coercion and punishment, as criminals against the race, of those nations which refuse to recognise its claims and trample its interests under-foot in a mad attempt at individual aggrandisement and pre-eminence. Pan-Germanism is the latest bid for the hegemony of the human race, and it is an enemy that must be utterly destroyed. Never again will any nation be suffered to assume military supremacy over the civilised world.

V

The last stock argument of militarism is the so-called *moral function or value of war*. This is the most plausible of all because it contains a certain modicum of truth which needs to be disentangled, and its underlying fallacy exposed.

German military writers are never tired of pointing out that war is the last test of the higher virtues,—those expressing themselves in the principle of ultimate self-sacrifice.

We are just now in view of this principle in vivid operation. We see millions of men of various nationalities in the fact and act of freely pouring out their blood for their respective countries. Heroism is being manifested on a score of battlefields in its most dramatic form. And this is done not by the élite and noble of the race only; it is done by men of the rank and file, who have never manifested any outstanding quality of virtue in their previous life. It is said by Ruskin that the common mud of the

streets contains the ingredients of three most precious stones, the sapphire, the opal and the diamond. Truly the common masses of our population are to-day showing that they have in them the making of heroes and martyrs. Lads from the farm, the factory, the mill, the mine, the office, who usually look and act in a way that gives no hint of any latent greatness, whose speech is often foul, whose morals are often uncertain, whose manners are often uncouth —what wonderful, almost superhuman devotion and courage and sacrifice are they not manifesting to-day under the stern stress and arbitrament of war on the battlefields of Belgium, France, Silesia, Galicia, Gallipoli! We read of their heroic doings in a passion of admiration. And this is not the attribute of one side in the terrible conflict, but of all sides. In latent moral grandeur the amazing spiritual possibilities of common human nature are being exhibited on a scale so overwhelming, that one must freely confess to an immense uplifting of our moral estimate of humanity.

And that war does always more or less tap this fountain of heroism that lies beneath the hard and unpromising soil of human nature is an unquestionable and splendid fact. In this last ordeal of human judgment it shines like a star out of the black night of horror and suffering in which it is set.

But at what a cost is this lesson brought home to us! How unspeakable are the tragedies which call it forth! What a price has to be paid for it! Fair towns and villages rased to the earth; the fruits of generations of industry thrown to the winds; a nation murdered and martyred—to form a background to these splendid object-lessons of devotion and self-sacrifice! It is good to know that men are capable of these heights of heroic daring and doing; and the sight *must* react healthily on the nations for whom these fine fellows are struggling and dying. But we must never lose sight of the fact that the heroism which we admire springs out of foul soil of hatred, lust, cruelty, and savagery. War, after all, as General Sherman said, is *hell;* its

heroisms are but as the glancing sunlight on a sea of blood and tears. Whatever may be the incidents of heroism that diversify its horrors, the tragedy wrought by war is the bottom fact. It means the gratification of a blood lust which is probably latent in all of us, but which is in times of peace chained in the lowest dungeons of the spirit of man. War awakens a train of evil passions than which there is no deeper depth of shame —deceit, hypocrisy, pitiless rage, sensuality, cruelty, and a score of others. It is the organised murder of multitudes on a colossal and appalling scale. Its final condemnation lies in the fact that if it awakens heroism, it slays the vast majority of the heroes that show it. We want our heroes alive, not dead; as citizens, not as denizens of a cemetery; as living, loving active men, not as corpses on a battlefield; as fathers of the future race, not as names on a memorial column. We are far from willing to believe that the only conditions for the manifestation of such heroism and moral grandeur is on the battlefield where men spend their energies

in killing as many of their enemies as they can. It may be right to confess with Ruskin that the true definition of a soldier is not that he is a man hired to kill, but a man who is willing to be killed for his cause. That will always dignify the soldier's calling. But when all is said and done it is better to live for a cause than to die for it,—though to be ready to die for one is the best proof that we are capable of living for one. And in the higher evolution of the future may we not look for the time when the moral condition of the race will be raised to the point where men will be as ready to sacrifice their lower interests during peace as our noble lads are proving capable of doing in war in these tragic days? There is as much scope for heroism in commerce as in war, in industrial life as in the crisis of battle, in the relation of buying and selling as in the tragic exchanges of a bayonet-charge. The heroes of the far future will be the men who will die rather than tell a lie; who would rather cut off their right hand than falsely sign their name; who will starve rather

than be guilty of an unfair bargain; who will honour to the last penny they possess any "scrap of paper" which records their promise; who will "swear to their own hurt and change not," though the heavens fall, and the earth be moved out of her place.

VI

It is one of the paradoxes of life that we are often forced to choose between two alternatives each of which is in itself an evil, but one of which, being the only means to do away with the other, may become a necessity. War as we have shown at some length is an evil of a colossal and far-reaching nature. But *what of dishonour?* That is an evil too, and a greater evil than war. We had to choose between these in August, 1914, and we chose war with no uncertain mind. And when an evil like war becomes a duty, *it is an evil in the moral sense no longer.* It is the only pathway to justice and liberty, and the triumphant vindication of the weak against the strong.

Canon J. M. Wilson, in a suggestive article in the *Hibbert Journal* for July, finds the justification of Britain's action in this crisis in Our Lord's parable of the Wolf and the Shepherd (John x. 1–18). He says, "Aggressive war is one of the expressions of the wolf-spirit, at present dominant in man. The antithesis of the wolf-spirit is the shepherd-spirit, at present nascent, weak, but growing, in man. Its ideal is freedom; freedom for all, freedom for life and spirit; freedom from the wolf; and it does not bar violence in combating the wolf. It furnishes, therefore, at once an antithesis to war and a sanction for war, and at last a cure for war. It furnishes also a cry, 'Down with the Wolf!'"

Here surely we find the true answer to the uncompromising Pacifist. The function of the strong is not only to defend himself, but also the weak. This is the shepherd-spirit, this is the Christ-spirit. There are many ways of doing this; the ultimate way, when all others fail, is to stand in the breach as the shepherd stands between

his sheep and the ravenous beast, whose purpose is "to steal and kill and destroy," and to resist its onslaught by force, and at the peril of life. So far as in this war we are animated by this spirit, it is in accord with the will of Christ that we should be at war. If we had failed to respond, it would have been as when the hireling shepherd "seeing the wolf coming, leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth them." To have abandoned Belgium in the face of the invading Huns would have been to come under this condemnation. What strengthens us therefore in this struggle is this deep consciousness that in combating Germany we are waging war against the wolf-spirit, which is the war-spirit, and preparing for an enduring peace which will make future horrors of this kind impossible in Europe. And for this we must be prepared to suffer loss and poverty, to sacrifice our best sons, to face, if needful, all the long-drawn sorrow of another winter campaign, and to endure to the end in order to break the full power

of militarism and free the world from the nightmare of apprehension, the waste of treasure, the insecurity of possession and life which has been slowly gathering round the nations for a generation. Then the world, let us hope, will breathe freely again, and set itself to the task of healing the ravages of war, that a new spirit may be developed among the nations, in which national and individual rights shall be equally sacred, and equally secure.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHALLENGE TO MILITARISM— THE PROBLEM OF PEACE

After War comes Peace; and in God's good time it will come to us again. But it will not be the peace that was. We shall wake up to a world which has passed through revolutionary change of outlook. Old horizons will give place to new; fresh and unfamiliar problems, difficulties and perils will meet us. When, granted the victory which we trust will be ours, we sheathe the sword again, and return to our ordinary lives, shall we be ready to face these problems, difficulties, and perils with a clear mind and a stout heart?

It may be said that as yet the issues of the future are too obscure to make any attempt to outline the policy for which we should prepare. Even now, however, certain suggestive lines are growing clear. The

world will be a sadder world than it has been for several generations; it will be a poorer world; *it will be a world that has gone through the experience of this war and is therefore very different in its temper, its outlook, its ideals*, from what it was before. Every department of life will be profoundly affected. In politics there will in all probability be a re-distribution of parties with new rallying cries, and new policies. In sociology and economics the old dividing lines between rich and poor, master and man, the classes and the masses, will remain; but the mutual relation between them will perforce be very different. In religion the old lines of cleavage between the historic churches will possibly seem of little account, and the feud between old theologies and new prove strangely irrelevant in face of the unparalleled need for a united front and a common message for the stressful times that await us. The new world into which we shall presently awake will be one that will call for the utmost resources of the statesman, the reformer, the prophet,

to guide the currents of its life, to reconstruct its relationships, and to reanimate its faith.

Historians in the far future will probably refer to this war as the real watershed dividing the nineteenth century from the twentieth. This is the fatal issue to which the converging lines of the scientific discoveries and inventions, the philosophies and moralities, economic and social developments, religious criticisms and theologies of the old century converge; and from this point all future movements will take their departure. A long and in a sense brilliant chapter in modern civilisation was closed when the German Emperor declared war on Russia in August, 1914, thereby dragging the other nations perforce into the turmoil; when the war ends, another chapter will open, great or ignoble, according to the temper in which the nations of Europe will face the new situation. Great wars have always profoundly affected the mentality as well as the outward conditions of human life. This greatest of all wars will affect us more profoundly than ever.

Some years ago the writer in an unpublished lecture made an attempt to summarise the achievements of the nineteenth century under a few rough generalisations, and to indicate the tasks which it had bequeathed for the twentieth century to carry out. On reading this over recently he was startled to find how entirely this war has thrown into prominence the main lines of thought there indicated, and, he is bold enough to think, justified the conclusions reached. In this concluding chapter he ventures to present these conclusions in brief and to suggest a policy to those who are anxious to prepare themselves for the tasks and duties of the years following this war which our descendants will probably look back upon as one of the great watersheds of human history.

I

The Nineteenth Century *discovered new sources of power for mankind; the task of the twentieth century will be to ethicise its uses.*

We have already characterised modern civilisation as distinguished from what preceded it as an attempt to improve the planet as a home for man, and to transform it from an inhospitable place of sojourning into a desirable residence for a race bent on making the best of this world, whatever be its fate in the next. Let us consider this point a little more at large. Dr. Russel Wallace in his *Wonderful Century* gives us in parallel columns a comparison of the great inventions and discoveries already in the possession of mankind at the beginning of this period, and of those which had not been thought of in the year 1800, but which to-day are commonplaces. In the former list we have the mariner's compass, the beginning of the steam engine, the telescope, barometer, and thermometer, printing, the rudiments of modern chemistry, and of electric science, and a few other detailed items. On the other side, i.e. among the distinctive achievements of the nineteenth century, are the following: railways, steamships, electric telegraphs, the telephone,

Lucifer matches, gas, electric lighting and power, photography, the phonograph, Röntgen rays, spectrum analysis, anæsthetics, antiseptic surgery, conservation of energy, measurement of the velocity of light, chemistry (synthetic and analytic), the development of the evolutionary theory, the germ theory of diseases, and since this list was complete, wireless telegraphy and telephony, photography at a distance, the motor car and the conquest of the air. "Look on this picture—and on that!" In addition to this astounding list, every ancient science and philosophy has been revolutionised in its method, material and scope, and new sciences and inventions are constantly coming to light. To put the case in a single word, mankind advanced more rapidly during the last century towards the realisation of the ancient command to people the earth and subdue it than during the whole previous millenniums of its history. Man has come to realise something of his function, and to feel his power as the viceregent and earthly representative of God Himself. To quote

words used elsewhere by the writer: "The Universe has been rediscovered from the human point of view. We have found out that Nature is not dead, but sleeping, that she hides behind her gentle placid face a perfect whirlwind of pent-up force; that every particle of matter is a centre of energy; that what we call solid substances are really but a system of interlocked but fiercely gyrating force-centres. The tremendous power of the new explosives is probably only a suggestion of the energies that slumber in every brick in our walls, in every flagstone under our feet, in every particle of food which we digest; and we have only to discover the secret of disturbing the equilibrium of matter to be able to blow the very globe into space. The puny body of man has always been the least important part of him; it is now of less account than ever, for the earth is being transformed into a kind of organism of which he is the nerve-centre; he is multiplying his limbs like a centipede, and forcing inanimate nature to supply him with organs

of motion which enable him to put distance and time to defiance. Already he can burrow through the earth like a mole, skim the ocean like a seagull, glide over the earth's surface like an antelope, and fly through the air like an eagle. By means of his far-reaching electric antennæ he can speak and hear at a distance, see what takes place miles away, and draw pictures with the intangible pencil of the light. In these days, when we can take a photograph through a brick wall, and carry on a conversation through miles of mountain, or across trackless leagues of ocean, there seems little to expect by way of fresh wonders. And yet we are probably only at the beginning of this astonishing process of transforming the blind forces of nature into instruments of the human mind and purpose. There are forces now running to waste in Nature whose very existence was not suspected twenty years ago, which when tamed to human needs will make us independent of all our present clumsy machinery, will make coal a superfluity, and put at our disposal physical

resources as far beyond our present possession as ours is beyond those of the Druids."

And what has been the issue of all this extension of man's sovereignty over the earth's forces ?

In many directions it has been full of benefit. Life has been enriched in numberless ways. But as already suggested, it has not to any great extent increased human happiness or contentment. Some of the coarser terrors of human life have been laid low; but the strain and stress of life has been increased. It has brought manifold new satisfactions within the reach of man; has modified for the better the environment of the race beyond recognition; but it has done more to quicken the longing for excitement and pleasure than it has to satisfy it. The appetite has outrun even the abundant food provided for it. A profound spirit of unrest and discontentment has fallen on the race. This perilous mood, infecting nations as well as classes and individuals with its virus, is chiefly responsible for this calamitous war. And once war broke out, it was soon

found that all the resources of science, meant to minister to the welfare of mankind, were at once commandeered for the purpose of destruction. The *will* to power seized the *means* of power, and prostituted every secret of science to the ends of an immoral and boundless ambition.

It will be the task of the coming peace to make this impossible in the future. It will do this only on one condition, that means may be found to ethicise the uses of the power over nature won by the patient research and the tireless industry of the great men who wrested those secrets out of the unwilling hand of nature. Here is a great engine of good when used in the interests of mankind. *But the impulse to deal with it has not as yet been moralised.* Before the war cloud rose above the horizon it was already being exploited by men who thought little of the benefit of humanity but much of their own aggrandisement. What is the common possession of all should never have been monopolised by the few for selfish purposes. It is the same spirit as has done

this on a small scale which on the large has gathered these armies for battle and turned man's conquest of earth and sea and air into elaborate means of destruction and death. And the *Governments* of the world have been the greatest sinners. In future the *peoples* of the world must see to it that the representatives of authority shall safeguard this perilous privilege and devise means for making its abuse impossible.

II

The Nineteenth Century discovered the secret of *accumulating wealth;* the Twentieth must master the secret of its wider *distribution.*

It would take us too far astray from our immediate purpose to undertake a detailed contrast between the beginning and the end of the nineteenth century as regards the storing up of wealth in the civilised world. It will be enough to point out the fact that machinery has revolutionised the rate at which it can be produced. Till quite

modern times the only wealth-producing machine was the human body, which was incapable of doing more than a definite amount of work, and of increasing its output except in *arithmetical* ratio, by the addition of more workers. Scientific machinery however *multiplies* the rate at which wealth can be produced, i.e. the increase is in a *geometrical* ratio, and this on an ever-rising scale as machines are gradually improved and perfected. It is impossible to place any limit to this process except the supply of materials provided by Nature herself.

Here again human power has been increased out of proportion to the ethical checks provided by the conscience of the community. The result of the age of machinery has been to produce an unequal distribution of wealth, together with a lessening sense of responsibility as to its use. The rich have grown richer as time has gone on, and the poor at least comparatively poorer. The annual production of wealth at the beginning of this century in Britain was about 1350 millions sterling; and yet this amount was

so unevenly distributed that 1,000,000 persons among the wealthy received more than twice as much of this income as 26,000,000 constituting the labour class. In America the inequality was still greater, there being a little over 4000 families of the rich who owned about five times as much property as seven million families of the comparatively poor. And this process goes on apace, so far unchecked. We find unbounded luxury at one end of the scale, leading at times to excesses of extravagance and waste; we find penury, and unrest, and a wage below the margin of decent existence at the other, often breaking out into fierce revolt against the cruelty of circumstance and the callousness or indifference of the rich, who reap the harvest that others have sown.

The causes of this unequal distribution of the world's wealth are of course many and various. They are partly physical, partly social, partly ethical and spiritual. In every community we find a proportion of citizens who are bodily unfit, others

who are industrially inefficient, others who are poor through thoughtlessness, self-indulgence and vice. And there are many who are the mere victims of circumstance, who, if they had the chance, would be able to give a good account of themselves. The chief conditions of comparative prosperity are *social opportunity*, which enables those who possess gifts to realise and exercise these to the full, and the possession of a certain amount of *capital* which in the modern world is essential to the development of wealth. The tendency is for these to be concentrated in the hands of the few, who tenaciously hold to their advantages, and instinctively grudge their wider extension. The result of modern industrial conditions is for capital to become more and more concentrated into huge aggregates in the form of trusts and limited liability companies, whose shareholders divide the profits, and which are mainly run not in the interests of those who create the wealth, but of those who possess it. Capitalists and labourers thus break into hostile camps;

and we have that perpetual succession of deadlocks, strikes and lock-outs, which are the industrial equivalent of war, and which during the past half century have caused endless misery and waste of treasure to all concerned. In the period immediately preceding this great international struggle the tension between employer and employed, between the interest-earning and the wage-earning classes, was approaching a perilous crisis fraught with possible consequences only less ominous than the issues of the war itself.

Even had not this war broken out, this problem of the better distribution of the world's wealth would have been one of the most insistent tasks of civilised humanity in the twentieth century. The strenuous efforts of political and social reformers during the last generation had so far done little even to check the pace at which wealth was concentrating in the hands of the few, and no all-inclusive and practical method of equalising its possession, except the wasteful and suicidal process of industrial warfare,

had been devised by anyone. In the face of the European struggle, still far from its issue, however, this problem will become one of appalling urgency. For while the future creators of the world's wealth are being killed off in countless multitudes, a vast proportion of the store of wealth created in the past is being dissipated into thin air by the struggle itself. It will be a poverty-stricken Europe that will wake up presently, when the war is over, and it will be all the poorer because the war will do nothing to cure mankind of its acquired love of comfort and ease, so that there will be a wider gap than ever between desire and satisfaction. Money will be dearer than within living memory, its purchasing power less; and those whose incomes are fixed, or whose earning capacity has reached its limits, will be sore put to it to keep up their old standard of living, and in the case of the very poor to pay for the necessaries of life. There are dark possibilities of social disturbance and revolution ahead of us unless some means of lessening the contrast between

rich and poor is devised. In countries democratically governed the remedy is theoretically in the hands of the people themselves, in so far at least as legislation can deal with such a problem; but economic problems are not very amenable to legislative solution, and nothing short of a drastic reform in public opinion, and a clearer realisation of the ethical responsibilities associated with the possession and distribution of wealth, will go to the root of the question. How to produce such a reformation is one of the most pressing questions of the day. It is to be hoped that the sense of national solidarity fostered by this war will predispose the minds of all to a better mood than prevailed during the last century on this question. In the last resort the question becomes one of religion, and it is on that plane of thought and feeling alone that this sore problem can be radically solved.

III

The Nineteenth Century discovered and developed the *organic unity and interdependence of the human race;* the task of the Twentieth Century will be to *transmute the fact of human solidarity into its ethical equivalent—the recognition of universal human brotherhood.*

In 1800 the various races and peoples of the earth were still but loosely concatenated and bound together. A considerable amount of international intercourse and commerce existed between adjacent nations, and the various continents were coming into incipient trade relations; but *all* nations were then far more self-contained than *any* are nowadays. The invention of the steam engine and the steamship, the building of railways, docks, and great emporia all over the world, the humanising effects of travel, education, and literature; the unifying influence of physical and mental science; the great missionary movement, which opened up new lands to commerce and civilisation,

as well as to the Christian religion;—these and many other influences gradually drew the extremes of the earth together, and helped mankind to realise in a very practical way that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth." The unity of the race, so far as mutual dependence is concerned, is now a realised fact. The natural barriers—mountain, stream and ocean; nationality, race, religion—which had hitherto separated even neighbouring tribes into repellent social entities, have no longer any inhibiting effect on an intercourse which is literally international and world-wide. The effect of all this has been to universalise the apostle's principle of the solidarity of the Church, and to make men of all nations and races literally members of one another, so that "if one member suffer, all the other members suffer with it." The world's markets are really one; what happens at one end of the earth may instantly affect prices at the other; a war or a revolution in one country may upset the balance of trade in a distant colony.

The delicate complexity of human relations is well exemplified in the extraordinary sensitiveness of the system of international stock exchanges which register the rise and fall in the value of capital and of commodities all over the world. The discovery of a new process of manufacture in the West Riding may make the fortune of a merchant or ruin an industrial competitor in China or Peru; a new invention in Cincinnati or New Orleans may destroy the prosperity of a mining town in Belgium or South Wales. Truly, of all mankind it may now be said, they are many members, yet but one body.

Such are the facts; but as yet men's attitude and temper have not been adjusted to the facts. On the contrary, as we have had occasion to point out in a previous chapter, while all the world has been slowly becoming one in the industrial and commercial and human senses, the principle of nationality—owing to the recrudescence of the military spirit — has become re-emphasised in its divisive aspect; so that while, in the interchange of social and

material benefits, the various peoples have been growing more and more mutually dependent, most of them have acted as though they were still inherently antagonistic and mutually repellent entities.

And here we may claim as a nation to be the pioneers of a better time as opposed to most other nations, especially Germany. Britain stands to-day for that type of nationality which recognises the growing organic solidarity of the race; Germany for the atomistic type which insists on an egoistic conception of national life. Our colonial empire is based on the principle of a free development of new national types, linked by a common loyalty, but each at liberty to evolve on its own lines; that of Germany is built on the principle of a standardised form of government, and of identical social institutions. We stand for free trade and unrestricted commerce with all and sundry who desire to deal with us, and we take our chance freely with our rivals; Germany stands for high tariffs, with a view exclusively to the interests of its own people.

That we are in the line of the future evolution of humanity is shown by the passionate loyalty of our colonies and dependencies, in face of the struggle between the two ideals, which is now moving to its consummation; and there is no doubt that down deep in the hearts of neutral nations there is a profound hope that we shall win an abiding victory.

But the triumph of our type of civilisation is but a stage towards the recognition of that higher principle of solidarity involved in the recognition of universal human brotherhood as its spiritual equivalent. This can never come along the path of free nationality and free trade. It can come only along the path of true religion. Human brotherhood is an empty phrase except as the corollary of the Divine Fatherhood. Many birds and beasts instinctively recognise a kinship of species and kind, and act together against their common enemies; but in their relations to one another within their species they are instinctively egoistic (except perhaps temporarily during the mating season). Altruism,

even in the secondary sense of the recognition of the moral claims of our fellow-man on our consideration and co-operation, is a human development; and it finds its spiritual justification in the doctrine of our common descent from God, and its highest impulse in faith in the Incarnation, and the Cross of Christ. It is idle to expect that the ideal of brotherhood should become an operative principle apart from these distinctively Christian beliefs. The highest interests of humanity are thus bound up with the acceptance of Christianity as a world-religion. This alone can break down the barriers of self-interest which hinder the social solidarity of mankind from reaching its finest development. The retrogressive attitude and action of Germany in the policy that led to this war must be associated with the fact that the official and ruling classes in that country have rejected the Christian faith in favour of a "religion of valour" which is but the glorification, under a high-sounding name, of the instincts of the natural man, who loves domination above all things, and will fight

to the death for a position of advantage and supremacy.

IV

Finally, the Science of the Nineteenth Century, while establishing the truth that *Religion is a universal factor in human life*, lessened its hold on the human soul and *emasculated its form of objective authority*. It will be the task of the Twentieth Century to *revitalise Religion*, and re-establish it in its central place among the motive forces of life.

1. Nineteenth-Century Science, in the first place, established the truth that Religion is an organic element in human life. The science of anthropology has made this contribution to theology. Its researches into the psychic outlook and social habits of primitive (or decadent) tribes as well as of civilised nations, have established beyond controversy that no race is without its religious beliefs and customs. Man, always and everywhere, is intuitively religious. Apart from the sophistications of a materialistic

view of the world and of man, he recognises his spiritual as naturally as he recognises his physical environment, and is moved to establish relationships of fellowship and friendship with it. The grotesque and often cruel forms in which this instinct embodies itself only prove how powerful and irresistible is its action. The "comparative method" of studying religions also carries home the conviction that nowhere has mankind been able to do without some form of religious faith. Savage and civilised, bond and free, are here at one. The earliest relics of the cave-men, the ruins of ancient civilisations as they have been slowly uncovered from desert sands, the literary deposits of the great ages of intellectual activity, all bear testimony to the central place and influence of religion in human life under every condition of culture, and in all stages of social and political evolution. When nations lose faith in religion, they prove that they have already passed the meridian of their development, and are on the descent that leads to decay and dissolution. This is true at least of all

ancient peoples. On the contrary, the nation which is the most persistent in maintaining its individuality, though it has no rood of land to call its own, and is scattered over the earth in small and isolated communities —the Jewish—is a nation that has tenaciously retained hold of its traditional religion amid all the vicissitudes of its history, and finds in it a social bond which survives persecution, adversity, and prosperity with equal stubbornness. There is no reason to doubt that this will be true ultimately of modern nations.

2. But what is even more important to note is the fact that modern science and philosophy, and the rise of naturalistic criticism, have greatly weakened the appeal of the only religion that can hope to hold its place in the modern world. The Christian faith has passed through more than one eclipse during the last two thousand years, but it has so far risen from the grave to which unbelief and immorality have more than once consigned it. It has passed recently through another eclipse, and even we in

Britain have not failed to experience an ebb tide in its hold on the nation as a whole —as our confused theologies and our emptying churches bear solemn witness. The mordant alembic of criticism has dissolved many an ancient belief and necessitated a reconstruction of essential doctrines which has hardly yet begun. But worse than all that criticism or agnosticism or any other -ism can do, is the general indifference to all forms of religious belief, the spiritual vacuum in which the souls of so many thousands of our fellow-citizens are apparently dying of asphyxia.

In this direction again, we find that Germany is the arch-sinner. It is a commonplace that for the majority of that gifted nation Christianity is viewed as an exploded creed. Instead we have a reversion to type in the form of a resuscitated "religion of valour," and this is but the robing in priestly garments of the will-to-power which does duty there for the real thing. But is there not even in our own dear land the same impulse, in a disguised and attenuated

form? What is the will-to-knowledge and certainly the will-to-wealth but the will-to-power under another name? The modern man desires knowledge supremely that he may further control nature; and he desires wealth supremely that he may further control his fellow-man. In this war we see the result of both unbridled forms of will in the prostitution of knowledge and wealth alike under the heel of militarism and the lust for domination. This is the logical issue of knowledge without faith, and of power unsanctified by a higher obedience.

It is to be hoped that the world will come to see, through the sad tragedy of this war, that the only corrective and specific for the *impasse* to which nineteenth-century civilisation has come so suddenly, is a revival of true religion. The Christianity of the future will differ in some important aspects from the Christianity of the past, but the essentials must be retained if it is to live at all. And the essentials are all concentrated in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the true and only Redeemer of the world.

To whom else shall we go—to the shadowy Buddha, to the hard and narrow Mahomet, or any of the fantastic cults of East or West? There is only One who can meet our need and ease us of the intolerable weight of this titanic but weary modern world. His the only ethical code that still beckons us on to a higher life; His the only source of release from the burden and the sorrow of sin; His the only Cross whence sounds the word of release and forgiveness; His the only Heaven where our souls can find rest and higher service beyond the grave. For nations as well as for men He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

In this sore crisis in our national history —this is the burden of this little book— we are met on all hands by the challenge of Christianity to our faith and our obedience. To many of us individually throughout the community it is the one refuge from the turmoil and stress of the hour, the one quiet place of shelter amid the storm. Our consolation is that God rules, and that whoever wins or fails, in the end His will must prevail.

And our hope is that from the failure of modern civilisation, which has come to this pass because it has ignored the supreme place of spiritual realities in its pursuit of material ends, and forgotten the gentle but potent forces of faith, hope and love as the solvents of all international and personal rivalries, and the root principles of the higher life of nations and men—it will once more listen to their voices, and obey their behests. Until this is done, peace can bring no enduring blessings, for it will only resolve itself into a warfare of a different kind. A civilisation which finds no place for these higher realities has proved itself bankrupt, and has ended in the tragic anti-climax of this world-war. Is it not time to restore the old paths, and recognise once more the essential place of religion in the affairs and policies of nations ?

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHALLENGE TO RELIGION— THE PROBLEM OF RECONSTRUCTION

Is it possible at this stage to throw out any suggestion of the lines along which religious thought and life must move if faith is to regain her hold on the modern world? One thing is perfectly clear,—if Christianity cannot be so restated as to meet the fundamental conditions of the new time, and so presented as to appeal to the heart and will of men, the only prospect for the future of civilisation is to face the Universe *minus* any religion at all.

Such a prospect is ceasing to be attractive even to secular writers. It is beginning to be recognised that religion is an integral factor in a normal life, and that a social order devoid of spiritual sanctions is lacking in the essential conditions both of progress and

stability. It was no accident that the godless French Revolution ended in the reactions of the Napoleonic era. It is no accident that the eclipse of evangelical religion in Europe during the last quarter of the nineteenth century has been succeeded by an era of universal militarism. If the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be dethroned in the thoughts of men, it is now clear that there is no deity that can take His place but the great Moloch of Force whose high-priest is Fear, whose altar steps are red with innocent blood. War is a revealer of the thoughts of many hearts; and this war has suddenly confronted us with the great alternative which a godless civilisation, possessed of great resources of wealth and power, inevitably involves.

Is it then too much to hope that one result of this great struggle will be to make the world more accessible to the Challenge of Christianity to the acceptance of mankind? If so it must be a robuster and more full-blooded type than that which has proved so impotent to prevent this catastrophe.

I

We have already had occasion to point out that in the nineteenth century the most strenuous efforts were made to interpret the Universe on a naturalistic basis, and to make the very notion of God otiose to both philosophy and science. Hegelianism, while professing to retain that idea in the form of the Absolute, did so at the cost of emptying it of positive content, so divesting it of all practical power. The agnosticism of Spencer, while positing the fact of God as the *prius* of all thought, reduced it to similar impotence. Naturalistic Science, by reducing all reality to the fundamental postulates of physics, attempted to explain mind as well as matter in terms of motion and mass. Under the pressure of these tendencies, religion, as the recognition of the relation of the human soul to a supernatural Divine Person, having no objective reality to correspond to it, became regarded as a mere subjectivity, and had to be explained away as the last stronghold of superstition and *Aberglaube.* The

astonishing success of the scientific movement on its own lines, gave a factitious importance to this negative attitude towards spiritual reality; and while there have been many earnest and capable thinkers in all departments who have strenuously stood up for the rights of faith, and the religious impulse has successfully asserted its claims in many directions in the sphere of practical life, it cannot be denied that the drift has been predominantly against its claims on the allegiance and obedience of mankind, and that it has consequently lost much of its influence and power of appeal.

Nor is it doubtful that the centre and stronghold of Naturalism has been found in Germany. The Teutonic mind is nothing if it is not thorough and wholehearted, and once the process of trying to explain the Universe in terms of Naturalism was fairly under way, it found its most consistent votaries among German thinkers, who proceeded to apply it with logical consistency to every department of thought and life. This has been done with such untiring industry, and

such conspicuous ability, that other nations have come under a kind of obsession to the same tendency, with results that are only beginning to be realised. We are waking up to the fact that Pan-Germanism, which in the world of affairs has never been more than a crude and impossible dream, has long been an oppressive fact in the world of thought. It has been a part of the spiritual Welt-Politik of that gifted but assertive people to pose as the only creative centre of progressive thought; and the rest of the world has for some mysterious reason more or less tamely succumbed to the claim, and as a consequence has ceased to exercise its independence of judgment, and its free initiative in thought. Much indeed of Germany's dominance has been due to her undoubted thoroughness of method, her uncompromising habit of carrying every line of argument to its ultimate issue. None the less is it a disaster that she has been permitted to assume so predominant a leadership over the world's thought, and that other nations have been so ready to recognise the unwarrantable pretension. This

war will not have been fought altogether in vain if it breaks this real if unconscious enslavement, and stirs other peoples to an assertion of their inherent right and bounden duty to strike out lines of independent thought which, while recognising the world's debt to the thoroughness and the industry of the German mind, and receptive of all her solid contributions both to philosophy and science, are independent of her tyranny, and characteristic of their own national genius.

II

The obsession to which we have alluded is in no direction so marked as in the sphere of theology. And it is there, where obsessions are so subtle and so potent of evil results, that the entail must be broken.

Let us guard ourselves against an obvious misconception. The great critical movement, the fountain-head of which has been in Germany, is not to be identified with any particular school of thought, nor are we to grow suddenly sceptical of its assured results

because we are at war with that country. *These have come to stay.* The process which has given us a New Bible, whose literary origins have been traced to their sources, and whose relations to the historical events of which it is the literary deposit have been largely settled, must not be discredited for any reasons irrelevant to the solid facts. Nor must it be forgotten or ignored that in Germany there have always been many schools of thought, conservative as well as progressive in tendency, which have been marked by the same fine and thorough scholarship. It would be sheer ingratitude to deny our debt to these earnest and devoted men; and it would be a mere policy of panic to refuse to accept whatever contributions they can make to our religious thought in the future. A movement of reaction based on prejudice could only bring a Nemesis in its train.

Recognising this freely and fully, it is right to emphasise the fact at this critical time that British theology has suffered for at least a generation from the obsession of

the German mind, and has failed to strike out an independent line of its own.

Our work has been mainly elaborative and expository of the positions attained by one or other of the schools of thought across the Channel, or somewhat weakly critical of those positions. No attempt has been made to build up a distinctively British school of thought, expressive of the inner movements of our own spiritual life. The result has been to inhibit the free development of our religion, and to make our thought ancillary to a type of mind different in its working, and alien in its ideals, from our own.

In at least two definite directions has our theology suffered from this obsession; and these represent the two dominant tendencies of German theology during the nineteenth century.

1. The first is the Hegelian tendency, which has aimed at substituting a religion of *idea* for a religion of *fact*. The first great Biblical critics were Hegelian in their philosophical outlook; and from the time of Strauss and Baur to that of Drews and

Jensen, there has been a critical movement which has aimed at depreciating the importance of the historical foundations of our faith, and resolving them into myth, legend, and ideal reconstructions of unimportant historical events in the interests of faith. There has been a kaleidoscopic succession of critical "tendencies" since the day of the pioneers, and the results of their application to the facts have been diverse in the extreme; but while in profound disagreement with one another in detail their net effect has been to etherealise the historical element in primitive Christianity, and to make the Person and Work of Jesus a mere vehicle for certain ideal reconstructions of thought. He is significant for them only because He embodied certain concepts of value for a spiritual purpose. Theology under such conditions becomes a department of philosophy, and makes no real appeal to the average man; and Religion, hampered by such a process, loses its place as the highest determining principle of life. A God who is an abstraction, and a redemption that has been reduced to

a logical process, can have little to say to a world faced by the grim realities of temptation, and the solemn enigmas of a Universe full of sorrow, pain and perplexity.

2. Ritschl represented a strong reaction against the Hegelian tradition, for he made history regulative for religion, and tried to free it from the deadening hand of an abstract philosophy. His vindication of Jesus as the personal revelation of God, his emphasis on the Church as the concrete vehicle of religious life, his clear insistence on the value of religious experience, gave a new impetus to faith, and led to the founding of the religious-historical school in Germany, which has been the distinctive feature of recent theology in that country, and has greatly influenced our own thinking. Ritschl, however, was an agnostic in philosophy, and his followers have failed to strike a sufficiently positive philosophic note to hold the naturalistic bias at bay in the handling of religious origins, and especially in the discussion of Christian doctrine. The result has been to still further weaken the historical authority of the New

Testament record, and to present us with a humanistic Jesus, pre-eminent in goodness, and unapproached as a channel of religious truth, but whose Person has no determining significance for faith. There are many writers in Germany of which this is not true, but German thought as a whole has undoubtedly moved in this direction. It has further tended to reproduce its type in this country, and has infected the general atmosphere of our current theology with a naturalistic miasma which is the poison-gas of true religion.

III

The true antidote to this subtle influence is to recognise and emphasise the transcendental element in the Christian Faith, and to insist on its vital importance in our reconstruction of religious thought. Naturalism has long since received its *coup de grâce* in philosophy. It is time we broke away from the last traces of its influence in theology.

The central facts of religion are the reality of personality in God and man, and of their

mutual relations. Without the one there is no adequate object for faith; without the other it has no valid function to fulfil. Unless both are true, there is no possibility of religion in the Christian sense of the term. Anything that dims our recognition of these basal facts inhibits the free approach of man to God, and the adequate reception of His grace into the soul.

The Faith of the future must give its full value to this personal relation between God and man, and follow it out fearlessly to its conclusion. Religion is the experience of a free spiritual intercourse in which both contribute their part, man in prayer and aspiration, God in revelation and redemption. The history of religion in this country shows clearly that when this intercourse has been vivid, and warm, and unhampered, individual life has been rich in spiritual experience, social life has been earnest and progressive; when it is hindered by the barriers of an inadequate philosophy, it has been lacking in power and freedom of action.

And the religion of the future must demand

a fairer treatment from philosophers, psychologists, and students of history than it received during the past century. First from *philosophers*. Their tendency has been to ignore or at best to tolerate her affirmations, and that only in so far as these do not run counter to their own postulates; where they have been inconsistent with their positions it has been a vicious habit of philosophers to belittle or explain away the profoundest experiences of the soul. If later thinkers had followed Kant in his frank recognition of the fundamental postulates of the spiritual life—God, Freedom, Immortality—and made their systems conform to these highest intuitions of human personality, the course of European thought would have been along a higher pathway, and the history of the nineteenth century would have told a nobler story. The theologians of the future must claim a freer liberty of prophesying than they have been content with in the past, and insist on an equal place with the philosophers in the pursuit of truth.

Psychologists must also be more respectful

in their analysis of the mind on its spiritual side, and recognise the organic place of religion in human life. Those of us who passed our youth under the sway of the sensationalist and associationist school of Mill and Bain well remember the quiet contempt with which they treated the psychological aspects of religion. The earlier anthropologists and students of comparative religion, whose business it was to collate and systematise the manifestations of religious belief among ancient and less developed peoples, showed the same disrespect to the irrepressible impulse of the soul to recognise the spiritual world, which is its natural and inalienable environment. The confusion and inconsistency of these faiths must be freely allowed; what we have a right to demand is the recognition of the objectivity and ultimate reality of our spiritual environment, so dimly revealed to the nascent soul of man, which has ever been vaguely but earnestly "feeling after" God "if haply it might find Him." Many later investigators have shown a more open mind on this question, but it

has been mostly in a grudging and immature way.

And the *historian* has erred in the same direction. His tacit assumption that there are in history no higher factors than can be subsumed under physical and human categories has thrown the moving panorama of events out of its true perspective. As a reaction against the too-ready identification of the mysterious with the Divine, and the confusion of superstitious fancies with spiritual agencies, this was healthy and good; but to rule God out of history, and subsume His pervading activity under lesser categories is to be under the tyranny of the same naturalistic bias as has vitiated so much of the philosophic and scientific systems of the era that has just closed. It will of course be open to secular historians to limit their view to the purely human aspect of their subject; but for a complete and satisfying treatment of history on the grand scale, room must be found for higher considerations; and this is specially true of the history of religion, which is the story of God's gradual self-manifestation to

man, as well as of man's slow and imperfect response to the Divine appeal.

When a world of spiritual realities is freely recognised as the ultimate background as well as the pervading atmosphere of life, religion will take a new lease of power, and assert its ancient sway in all human affairs. She has for long been struggling against artificial barriers, her free initiative and enterprise cramped within unreal limitations of thought, enslaved by intellectual conventions that have usurped the place of valid axioms. The Queen of Sciences has thus been reduced to the function of a drudge in the house of her Father. It is time "to loose her and let her go," that she may once more enter on her rightful sovereignty.

IV

But the religion of the future must also set her own house in order, for it is in sad confusion and distress. We shall need in the coming time to recover vision, unity, aggressiveness, and practical activity, if our Faith is to reassert its ancient power. A world

ravaged by war will be little helped by a Faith that is uncertain of itself, whose organism (the Church) is split by disunion, which exists on sufferance and not by the royal right of its own vitality, and which has nothing to say to a social order that is a fermenting-vat of class tensions and mutual antipathies.

1. The first need of religion is to recover its spiritual vision. The confusion of tongues in theology is the result of a religion that has lost confidence in its supreme message for a world of sin. In its eagerness to accommodate itself to the hard intellectualism of the age, it has lost sight of its cardinal doctrines, and spoken with bated breath of those things which in ages of passionate conviction rang forth with no uncertain voice. Not so did Paul preach the Gospel of the grace of God to Greeks and Barbarians in his day, and leave behind him in his missionary journey a chain of churches incandescent with faith and resistless in zeal. Not so did Augustine gather into his soul all the culture and learning of his time and send it forth transformed into a system of theology that stood

the onset of a thousand years, and then rekindled its ancient glow in the sunrise of a Reformation that ushered in a new era of spiritual life for Europe. Not so did Luther announce afresh the sovereignty of faith, and Calvin build up his splendid system four-square to all the onslaughts of his day, and Wesley spend his life in proclaiming a Gospel that transformed the land. These men all spoke the language of their times, but they made it proclaim the same message of renewal and salvation. For they had seen Him whom their sins had pierced, and they found in Him the release which they made known to others. It is this redemptive passion that has been lacking in the pulpit of recent times, a passion that can be begotten only by a vision of the Cross, and a fresh experience of its healing and emancipating power.

2. *Unity* is the next *desideratum* of the Church of Christ. If before the war the International Christian Church had been able to mobilise its forces for the propaganda of peace, and had exercised its combined energies for the defeat of militarism in all the lands of Europe

this war could not have broken out. For militarism thrives on the fears and antagonisms of nations; it is the logical issue of their mutual suspicions and rivalries; while religion stands for all that unites and welds them into one. And when once more peace returns to the exhausted Continent, there will be small prospect of its being anything better than an armed truce unless the nations learn a nobler spirit in their relations with one another, and this can only come by realising the deeper unity of the race in Christ. "Moral power," writes Dr. Theodore Munger,* "can only reduce armaments to a minimum. The final security of the world's peace shall be international Christianity. Greater Church Unity is a necessary condition for that. . . . The Churches must begin first at home to combine their many gifts of tongues, and be found ready to declare their Gospel in one spirit and power, whenever peace shall throw wide open the door of opportunity. The heart of the people is ready to respond to the call of these times;

* *The Constructive Quarterly*, July, 1915, pp. 373–4, in a suggestive article on "Christianity After the War."

but have they leaders who are Church statesmen—men who have prophetic vision, and the will to follow it; ecclesiastical leaders who in this crisis of stupendous consequence for humanity can be broad enough and high enough to subordinate all lesser values, or divisive Church issues, to the supreme duty of throwing the whole united force of Christianity into the warfare against the causes of war, that a new rule of righteousness and peace may be begun in our day on earth? It is for the men of influence in the Church to answer. In their several folds shall they be content to remain good Churchmen, or at any sacrifice shall they become good Christians?"

The writer in the above passage is appealing to the American Churches, but his words apply with even greater force to the Churches of the tortured lands now devastated by the fury of war. They failed to prevent the fire from breaking out. Will they not join their forces when peace returns, so as to make its renewal for ever impossible? Will they not forget their own disunion in a renewed sense of their common function, and organise their

energies to the one end of getting the peoples now locked in mortal combat to trust and love each other, since they have one God and Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ, who has broken down the middle wall of partition between them? To quote Dr. Munger once more—"The way to restore the lost Church Unity is—to restore it. Should a voice from above, out of the peace of Heaven, summon the many Churches to unite in a Holy Alliance at a fixed date—the next day after peace shall be declared, or next Christmas Day—*they could do it.* Their present devisive issues would at once be held subordinate to this great commandment; all the precious things of all churches would be brought in and made more precious in the joy and glory of such a Christmas morn. We should wonder what could ever have kept us apart. The Churches have now the commandment 'Love one another'; it is left to us to fix the date."*

3. But even the call to unity is only the condition of a still higher function for the Church of the future. It must devote itself

* *Ibid.*, p. 379.

to *healing other rivalries than those that divide the nations.* There are divisive forces within our corporate life which threaten the peace and well-being of the world. Modern society is racked by class divisions, industrial tensions, and warring economic interests. These have often resulted in struggles which bring in their train tragedies of suffering and loss scarcely less poignant than those caused by a great campaign,—sufferings and losses none the less real because often borne in silence, and marked by no bloodshed or outward disturbance. Social unrest is due to the fact that the new relations created in an age of machinery have so far not been moralised. The power of capital has often been used ruthlessly to oppress labour, and labour in its turn has seldom failed when opportunity occurred to revenge itself on capital. Strikes and lockouts are only incidents in a silent warfare of interests that goes on with increasing bitterness from one year to another. And what is true of industry is as true of commercial life, where the rise of limited liability companies has turned the (often)

affectionate relations of master and employé into a pitiless and conscienceless oppression. The callous phrase recently used to justify the unspeakable cruelties inflicted on civilian and soldier alike in Belgium and Poland—"War is war"—is well matched by the immorality of the phrase "Business is business," which has often done duty to cover a pitilessness that matches that of the Huns. There is need of a drastic reformation in the economic relations of the modern world. And here, again, nothing will prove effectual as a remedy except the emergence of a new spirit which aims at humanising these relations. In point of fact the mutual dependence of all classes on each other is absolute. Capital is impotent until it is manipulated by the industry of the labourer; labour is equally impotent till capital gives it opportunity to use its energies fruitfully. In the nature of things there is no antagonism between these necessary factors of economic progress. What each needs is to be renewed in the spirit of its mind, and selfishness on the one side and the other is killed by a sense of common interest and reciprocal benefit.

There is but one mediator between man and man, as there is but one between man and God. We sweep the horizon in vain for any social evangel that can meet the trouble but that found in the Christian Gospel. So far the Church has taken but little part in bringing together the warring factions that divide the world of industry and commerce; nor have those concerned shown much desire to listen to the voices that have heralded the only way to peace. Till a clear note of reconciliation is struck on the one side, and a willing ear is lent to it on the other, there is no hope of any real betterment. Those who would continue the present system, based on competition and irresponsible power, and those who think they can put matters on a right footing by socialising land, capital and industry, are equally wide of the mark. We must organise the moral forces that are implicit in society, and prepare a Highway for the Lord of Love, if we would save the world from the disruptive principles that now divide it into mutually repellent factions; we must usher in the true Utopia—the Kingdom

of Heaven, which is the kingdom of right relations between man and man, and between man and his Maker. It has been well said that every true reformation on earth must come by way of Heaven. The new Jerusalem must "descend out of Heaven from God." It will be the function of the Church in the days to come to preach this Gospel to every creature and to make disciples of all nations.

The story is told that at the battle of Gettysburgh—which turned the fortunes of the North in the American Civil War—there was late in the afternoon a pause in the struggle, and both armies lay down exhausted in a wood for half an hour. During the day the sounds of battle had sounded in their ears continuously; it was as every battle must be, hell let loose on earth. But in the sudden lull, as the wounded lay bleeding and panting on the ground, new sounds broke on the stillness. It was the voice of birds in the trees overhead, singing their snatches of song as though the battle were miles away. Never did bird-voices discourse

such sweet music; visions of home and little ones, and all the joys of a life of peace and plenty seemed once more to be realities, and the one cry of both combatants was to end this terrible struggle which was turning God's fair earth into a shambles. Once more the bugles sounded the charge; the passions of war broke out again; but the memory of that little burst of bird-song never left the hearts of the survivors, nor the thrill it brought with it.

In the pauses of this terrible struggle, it is hard to hear the quiet voices of the spirit. But they are speaking to us all the time, and those whose ears are attuned to their music should be strained to listen to every whisper. For they after all are the voices that speak to us of the abiding and eternal realities which will remain when the noises of this lower world shall have passed into silence, and the tumult and the shouting are dumb. Many years ago, after the election of 1895, the writer cut the following anonymous little poem out of a newspaper,*

* *The British Weekly*. The writer has since learnt that they are from the pen of the editor, Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.

and it is applicable with only the change of a few names to the more stressful situation in which we find ourselves to-day. Let their message close this book :—

" Yesternight, when the smoke was thick,
I sat silent and heard the brawl—
' Chamberlain,' ' Morley,' ' Harcourt out,'
Till I grew weary, and sick of all
Went out and watched the darkening even,
Sought the touch of the airs of Heaven.

. . . . .

" Half a mile on, a sudden song,
Mounting above, in a girl's sweet breath,
Brought me to pause, and I caught the words,
' Victory, victory over death ! '
From a little chapel so deep in green,
The psalm was heard ere the place was seen.

. . . . .

" ' These be the things which last,' I said.
Shadows we are and shadows pursue,
Triumph and weep over vanities,
Strut and fret and make much ado.
Verily Christ, as He did say,
Is with two or three, who meet and pray.

. . . . .

" So while the people sang and prayed,
' These be the things that endure,' I said."

. . . . .

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